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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

"WE WANT, NOT YOUR MONEY, BUT YOUR CITIZENSHIP."
THE IMMIGRATION POLICY OF FRANK OLIVER.

BY

K. TONY HOLLIHAN (C)

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS.

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

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SUBMITTED BY K. TONY HOLLIHAN

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

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Abstract

Frank Oliver was Minister of the Interior from 1905 to 1911. Before that time he served his home community of Edmonton as a political member on both the Northwest Territorial Legislative Assembly and as a Member of Parliament. As citizens of a young and growing community, the inhabitants of Edmonton were deeply concerned with the immigrants that were coming to Canada, and would form its future society. Oliver enjoyed the platform he had as owner and editor of the Edmonton Bulletin, and attacked the pre-1896 Conservative Government its for inaction in the area of immigration policy. He supported the Liberal Government of Laurier and expected Clifford Sifton, the first Minister of the Interior under Laurier, to invigorate or reform the listless Conservative policy.

While he could not argue that Sifton failed to do this, Oliver expressed grave concern over the culturally alien immigrants Sifton was attracting. Sifton made significant efforts to lure people from Central and Eastern Europe, attracting immigrants who were often economically desirable, but who were deemed culturally unacceptable by Oliver and those who thought as he did. He felt policy should concentrate on attracting immigrants primarily from Britain, people who would reinforce and protect Canada's fledgling British society. Oliver believed ethnocentrically that the British and Americans, those culturally closest to Canadians, were the best that

Canada could hope to secure. Those from elsewhere could only threaten the kind of Canada that British Canadians hoped to establish and maintain.

Oliver became Minister of the Interior in 1905. This gave him the opportunity he desired to mould immigration policy the way he desired, and he quickly set about to do so. With the 1906 Immigration Act he established the mood for immigration policy for the better part of the next decade. Though events beyond his control were to play havoc with his plans, the twin pillars of selection and restriction were established as the foundations of Canada's immigration policy. By 1908-09 they were beginning to have an effect on the type of immigrant accepted into the country. In the 1910 Immigration Act Oliver further expanded the principles of greater restriction and more careful selection. Immigration statistics from the period demonstrate that Oliver was able to attract culturally desirable immigrants while not sacrificing the economic needs of Canada. At an important time in its development, Oliver supplied the nation with immigrants that he believed were best able to contribute to its social and economic infrastructure.

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Chapter I

"A case of national hari-kari"

Immigration Policy Before 1905

Except for the native population, the outposts of the Hudson's Bay Company, and those connected with the fur trade, in the years before Confederation the area constituting present-day Alberta was perceived as a virtually empty and untamed wilderness. On the site of present day Edmonton, a lone fort, a solitary Hudson's Bay Company garrison, stood stoically against the wilderness. However, in the few years following the political union of the four eastern provinces, this was to gradually change. Settlers slowly began to arrive, and by the early 1870's a small distinct community began to emerge outside the environs of the fort.[1] Unlike the fur traders these were part of a new wave of settlers, dominated by British Canadians anxious to establish a society in the mould of the Ontario agricultural community which the majority of them had left.[2] The requirements for admittance to that society would not be based on race or religion but on

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1. J.G. MacGregor, Edmonton: A History, 2nd ed. (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1975), p. 79.

2. Gerald Friesen, The Canadian Prairies: A History, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), p. 245. Freisen delineates five stages of immigration to western Canada.

culture. Frank Oliver was carried along in this wave. And he too was shaped by the forces that guided it.

One of the strongest forces which influenced the destinies of those early settlers to Edmonton was the desire to maintain, to build upon, and to work within the British Canadian society, culture, and institutional framework. Later waves of immigration were often believed to be a serious threat to these most important features. When a group of immigrants arrived whom these Edmontonians perceived as unable or unwilling to assimilate to their norm, the citizens struck out, calling for restrictions on further immigration. Such a reaction was not unique to Edmonton. Newspapers across the west reflected similar attitudes. However, the reaction in Edmonton makes for a good case study. For various reasons, it was a prime example of a Canadian frontier settlement which was forced to fight for survival. The city's original settlers were a fairly homogeneous group of ethnically British, native Ontarian settlers.[3] Perhaps more importantly, one of the city's most influential men, Frank Oliver, became Minister of the Interior in 1905, and was thus given the opportunity to put the views of Edmontonians into action. To understand what Oliver attempted to do from 1905 to

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3. Canada, Parliament, Sessional Papers, 1900, no. 25, p. 18. In the early 1870's, the native and French population equalled the British Canadian, but the situation was quickly altered.

1911, and why, it is necessary to examine his career before 1905.

Frank Oliver was born on September 9, 1853, in the rural Upper Canadian village of Brampton.[4] After dropping out of high school, and working for the twin bastions of the Liberal party in the media, the Toronto Globe and the Manitoba Free Press, Oliver arrived in Edmonton in 1876. This remained his home for the next fifty years. Like others from Ontario, Oliver had come expecting profit from the boom which would accompany the anticipated railway.[5] In this respect he was typical of Edmonton's early settlers who sought to make their fortune, and even in the 1870's actively planned for success.[6] When news came in the mid 1880's of the decision to route the new transcontinental railroad far south of Edmonton, the struggling hamlet suffered one of its first blows. No doubt enthusiasms were dampened; spirits were not. No longer sure of the support they would receive from elsewhere, the inhabitants of the small town simply decided that they would have to make it on their own, and thus turned to the building and promotion of their home

4. William Waddell, "The Honorable Frank Oliver" (M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1950), p. 1. This is a good source for biographical details regarding Oliver.

5. Ibid., p. 11.

6. Carl Betke, "The Development of Urban Community in Prairie Canada: Edmonton, 1898-1921" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1981), pps. 18, 21.

with renewed determination and vigour.

In 1881 they hired a teacher, voluntarily paying his salary from their own pockets.[7] Telegraph connections linked the village with the outside. By 1880 Oliver had helped set up the Edmonton Bulletin, only the second paper in the North-west Territories. When it looked in the early 1890's as if Edmonton would finally have its railway connection via the Calgary and Edmonton line, Edmontonians' hopes were once again dashed when the line stopped short on the south side of the Saskatchewan River, giving added impetus to the emerging community of South Edmonton and fuel to Edmonton's fears that federal buildings might be located there.[8] When in June of 1892, South Edmonton's attempted "theft" of the Edmonton land office was thwarted by the actions of Edmonton's leading citizens, including Frank Oliver, it was becoming more and more clear that any success Edmonton would enjoy would be due to local vigilance and boosterism. Edmontonians believed that active Conservative opposition at the federal government level, for example, was the cause in the ten year delay before a bridge was built connecting Edmonton with the railway and the means to rapid commercial development. By this time, 1902, Edmonton had a population of 2,626, was incorporated as a town (1892),

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7. MacGregor, Edmonton, p. 94.

8. Betke, "The Development of Urban Community", p. 25.

and Oliver had been twice elected to Ottawa.[9] Preparations through the thin times of the late nineteenth century had laid a good foundation for the fat times that had emerged with the flood of immigrants to Western Canada.[10] In turn, this raised difficult questions about the nature of the society that was developing.

The questions were all the more difficult because of the confusing nature of immigration. Therefore, it is important to note early in the thesis, and it cannot be overstated, that the espousal of a restrictive immigration policy does not necessarily connote racism. Such was usually the case with Frank Oliver and many of his contemporaries. In his desire to have a selective immigration policy, Oliver's reasoning was not racist. If there was a pattern in his thought, it was that he believed that human abilities and characteristics were formed by culture. Comprehension of Oliver's nationalistic conception of the Empire is central in attempting to understand his views on immigration. Immigrants had a critical impact on Canada, and therefore on the role it could play in the Empire. Oliver saw himself, and those who arrived with him in those early years, as akin to those who arrived on the Mayflower. They were the first

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9. Sessional Papers, 1906, no. 17a.

10. Betke, "The Development of Urban Community," p. 22.

settlers, coming to a new land to build it according to a certain image they held, to tame it with the British institutions which were so successful in similar situations elsewhere in the world. Certainly those institutions were somewhat flexibly adapted to the situation in eastern Canada, just as they would be further adapted to conform to the needs of the West. But the point was that they were to be the groundwork on which an essentially British civilization was to be extended.

Frank Oliver reflected the views of many western Canadians when in 1896 he passed judgement on the recently defeated Conservative Government:

> What a farce has our so-called immigration policy been in the past! If the curtain were only drawn aside and the doings of the late government fully exposed the public would marvel that anything remains of the country worth saving. Indeed, the Dominion possesses great vitality to have stood all it has.[11]

Looking at the immigration statistics, it is a wonder Oliver was not more abusive. These show that in the latter half of the nineteenth century the three most popular non-European destinations for intending immigrants were the United States, Australia, and Canada. In the period from 1866 to 1899 the United States received 5.5 million immigrants while Canada had 1.5 million emigrate to her shores. In a much shorter span, from 1879 to 1890,

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11. Edmonton Bulletin, 28-12-96.

Australia received 2.5 million immigrants.[12] If the total numbers were small, the number of British immigrants to Canada paled in comparison. In the last four years of the Conservative administration, an average of only 10.3% of the total number of emigrants leaving the British Isles arrived in the country which prided itself on being the jewel in the imperial crown.[13] A further examination of Conservative policy shows its failure to solve the problem of Canadian emigration, as the exodus of nearly one million Canadians to the United States, by 1890, reveals.[14]

It has been suggested that the important result of the Conservative immigration policy was not the actual numbers, but that a start had been made in attracting immigrants, thus initiating the chain migration effect that was so crucial to Canada's immigration policy in the years before World War I.[15] This attitude was certainly not indicative of late nineteenth-century western Canadian opinion. As the numbers show, Canada was receiving a

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12. Friesen, Canadian Prairies, p. 185.

13. N.H. Carrier and J.R. Jeffery, External Migration: A Study of the Available Statistics 1815-1950, Studies on Medical and Population Subjects, no. 6 (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1953), pps. 92-3, 96. See Appendix 1.

14. Betke, "The Development of Urban Community", p. 10. See Appendix, Table 2.

15. Ibid., p. 185.

paltry few immigrants. The fact that many of Canada's problems at this time were due to factors out of the Conservatives' control, such as an international depression, and the availability of good land in the United States, matters little here. The Government was a convenient scapegoat for the West's crushed dreams. With few immigrating, and many emigrating, western Canada could only rejoice at the prospect of the end of the Conservative regime, and the dawning of a Liberal era. Expectations were great.

Clifford Sifton was Sir Wilfrid Laurier's choice for Minister of the Interior in 1896. In many ways Sifton was a man of the West -- young, aggressive, pugnacious, pragmatic, determined and ambitious.[16] When his eyes scanned the West he saw its potential, a land filled with farmers, fields golden with wheat. Canada's future prosperity lay beneath the plows of the immigrants he envisioned flowing into the West. With relish, he jumped into the process of fulfilling this prosperity. Sifton believed that the main cause of western stagnation was the inefficiency of the administration of the immigration policy of the Conservatives. He had few qualms about what they were trying to do; it was how they went about it that

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16. D.J. Hall, Clifford Sifton: The Young Napoleon 1861-1900 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1981), pps. 230, 263, 283.

concerned him.[17] The use of immigration literature, and immigration agents, block settlements, and the philosophy of not assisting immigrants, were all pieces of the Conservatives' immigration policy. Sifton, by and large, continued to employ this policy, but it was the energy he brought with him to the Department that helped fill the West with a productive agrarian population. If he had a motto, it was surely "energize, centralize, minimize, economize." Not particular about an immigrant's origin, Sifton concentrated the department's efforts wherever the best farmers were most easily obtained. It was not long before the West soon started to fill and be tilled, and for Sifton, that was what mattered.

Frank Oliver was at first pleased with the choice of Sifton as Minister, seeing him as "universally conceded to be eminently capable of filling [the West] with credit to himself and advantage to the country."[18] Finally, he expected, there would be an effective policy laid down to settle the West. Oliver was realistic. He did not expect miracles overnight and was prepared to wait a few years to see the results. He certainly did not expect what happened. The West, and particularly the Edmonton district, began to fill up with a population largely non-British. Canadians kept emigrating to the United States.

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17. Ibid., p. 230.

18. Edmonton Bulletin, 23-11-96.

The face of the West rapidly altered. Perhaps more importantly for Oliver, the face of Alberta, the district he represented, and that of Edmonton, his home, began to change. If one looks at Table 1 in the Appendix, a number of startling facts are evident. Between 1885 and 1905, the number of Edmonton's inhabitants born in Europe (not including Great Britain) grew from less than 1% to more than 25%. The change in percentage for Alberta was not as great, from less than 1 % to 14.5%. For the North-west Territories as a whole, the change over the twenty-year span was in between that of Edmonton and Alberta, from 1% to just over 19%. By any standards, these were dramatic alterations, and the Edmonton district had more to be concerned about than either Alberta or the North-west Territories.

From his earliest days in Edmonton Frank Oliver was a staunch defender of the rights of the city in particular, and the North-west in general. His political career began in the 1880's when he was elected as Edmonton's member for the North-west Council.[19] His speeches and editorials were often acid commentaries on the inadequacy and ineptitude shown in government, first by the Conservatives, and later the Liberals. It was not haphazard criticism, but was aimed specifically at policies affecting the West. Not

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19. Waddell, "Honorable", passim. Oliver served elected terms from 1883 to 1885, and 1888 to 1896.

only the process of nation-building, but also that of national regeneration depended on the West. No one had more confidence in the West and its potential than those first settlers.

> The settlers had gone into the west and travelling for weeks had seen nothing but boundless prairies, vast and wonderful. The country was theirs for the taking and it was excusable if they felt a proprietary interest in the country and spoke of its resources and opportunities strongly.[20]

Coming to the west on their own initiative, forced by no one, and seeking only a place to build upon what already existed, they thought they had founded the future of Canada, and, by extension, the Empire.

It became obvious that different people shared different visions of the role the West was to play in the nation, and exactly how it was to play it. There can be little doubt that Clifford Sifton saw the West as essential to Canada's growth, just as Frank Oliver did. Yet these two men waged aggressive battles, in which personal hatred often played a role, over just what that position would be. For Sifton the West was economically central to Canada. Thus his version of quality:

> I think a stalwart peasant in a sheep-skin coat, born on the soil, whose forefathers have been farmers for ten generations, with a stout wife and a half dozen children, is good

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20. Edmonton Bulletin, 1-4-05.

> quality...I am indifferent as to whether or not he is British born. It matters not what his nationality is; such men [non-agricultural] are not wanted in Canada.[21]

The immigrant's economic role was of vital importance to the economy of central Canada. Although it has been argued that Sifton believed a moral fibre was engendered in the settler from the prairie experience -- an experience which would erase the immigrant's ethnic heritage, and create a fibre which was the foundation of national greatness-- this misses Oliver's point.[22] It was Oliver's opinion that an immigrant's heritage was brought to Canada with him as cultural baggage, luggage that was not likely to be emptied or abandoned once in Canada. Oliver repeatedly argued that immigrants' agricultural contributions were secondary to their social impact.

> The succesful growing of oats and wheat where they had never been grown before was a great achievement. But the main purpose was not merely to grow more and better oats from year to year but to create conditions of progressive well-being of the people of the locality and of the nation.[23]

Thus a demonstration of Oliver's concern for the nation.

How could one expect to maintain the proven quality

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21. Maclean's, 1-4-22.

22. Hall, Clifford Sifton, p. 269.

23. City of Edmonton Archives, Frank Oliver File. Address at Clover Bar celebration, 17-8-31.

of British Canadian society, when foreign immigrants of unknown quality and untold numbers were the principal new ingredients being added? It was all very well for Sifton to hold something resembling Frederick Jackson Turner's hypothesis of the transforming power of the frontier, but what if it did not succeed? Even more importantly, what was to happen during the transformation process? Sifton was confident of the powers of assimilation, an easy, sure process, as Canadians grew with the wheat. Oliver was somewhat more blunt, and less optimistic, as was obvious in a speech to Parliament.

> Do you know what the word "assimilation" means? It is a nice sounding word. Do you know that it means if you settle on a farm on the prairies amongst them [southern and eastern Europeans] or in their neighbourhood the schooling of your children [depends] on the tax-paying willingness and powers of people who neither know nor care anything about your schools? Do you know it means the intermarriage of your sons and daughters with those who are of an alien race and alien ideas? That is assimilation, or else there is no assimilation, and there will be no assimilation for many, many years, and the whole country will suffer a drawback to that extent for numbers of years.[24]

Of course, in cutting to the heart of the matter, Oliver was, to a certain extent, trying to be hyperbolic. Assimilation was a long hard process, in which the desired

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24. Canada, Parliament, House of Commons Debates, 1901, col. 2934, 12-4-01.

results were anything but guaranteed. In his eyes it was quite easy for central and eastern Canadians to bring in untold numbers of foreign immigrants when they neither had to live near them, nor to try to build a homogenous society with them.

This inability of easterners to view, or even to try to view, the immigration situation through the eyes of westerners, those most intimately involved with the actual social repercussions of the influx, was a constant concern for Oliver. From his seat in the House of Commons, he forcefully laid claim to being the representative of Alberta, and denied others the right to speak for it. How could non-westerners hope to have the necessary knowledge to understand the West, the people and their ideas?[25] The views Oliver expounded were, he claimed, to be those of tne settlers -- here he meant transplanted eastern Canadians[26] -- and there can be little argument that he spoke for most. It was easy for the people of eastern Canada to adopt a virtually unimpeded open-door immigration policy in their attempt to fill the country. They were secure in the knowledge that the great majority of those agricultural immigrants from central and eastern Europe would only ever see eastern Canada from the window

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25. House of Commons Debates, col. 151, 25-8-96; col. 2267, 30-9-96.

26. Edmonton Bulletin, 8-6-99.

of a train carting them out west. Unlike the East, and with a smaller British-Canadian population, and less secure social structures, the West faced the burden, the responsibility, of having to assimilate these central and eastern Europeans. This was not an easy task when one was also making a living, raising a family, assimilating Americans and British (a much less onerous task, but still necessary, as they were not Canadians) -- in effect, building a nation.

The fact that Sifton encouraged some, ignored others, and settled many of the new immigrants where he did, further deteriorated the situation. As previously stated, Sifton had a penchant for the farmer, who became the backbone of his immigration policy. His was a laissez-faire policy only insofar as virtually anyone professing to be remotely connected with farming was admitted. Bonuses were paid to steamship agents only for farmers and farm labourers.[27] It was natural for Sifton, once having made up his mind to get these desirable types, to try and obtain them from where they were most readily available. Those in central and eastern Europe required little encouragement. In Oliver's eyes, that was an essential part of the problem. He felt that the men Canada needed were those who were also wanted by other countries.

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27. Palmer, "Responses", p. 170. Bonuses were also paid for female domestic servants.

> The man who is too easily convinced to change his place of abode is the least good, whatever change he makes. The man who will not leave the Old Country unless he has a pretty sure thing in the new is the man whom the new country wants most.[28]

Oliver's philosophy was simple:

> My contention is this: That when we are taking measures to procure settlers for our country, it is our business to secure the best settlers and to reject those that are not the best. That is why we spend our money, and if we do not spend our money that way, we misspend our money.[29]

For Oliver, being an agriculturalist simply was not enough. A producing class was not all that was desired or needed. The most important quality in an immigrant was citizenship. "We want citizens as well as tillers of the soil."[30] With little success, Oliver repeatedly attempted to hammer this point home.

Sifton did not trust Oliver, and considered him a dangerous individual. He was certainly a thorn in Sifton's side. "At times Sifton thought him more useful to the Tories than a straight Conservative would have been."[31] In

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28. Edmonton Bulletin, 18-10-01.

29. House of Commons Debates, col. 2935, 12-4-01.

30. Edmonton Bulletin, 10-1-00, 10-8-00; also House of Commons Debates, col. 10187, 14-6-00, and col. 6566 14-7-03.

31. Hall, Clifford Sifton, pps. 62, 282.

1898-99 Sifton granted a block of land some fifty kilometers northeast of Edmonton for the settlement of some 8,000 Galician immigrants, making Oliver furious. The whole concept of block settlement was bad enough. "What reason do we have to expect their ready assimilation here, when situated in bodies large enough to ensure the perpetuation of their old systems?" the Bulletin queried. "This is a question concerning the very life of the nation - the foundation of its life...."[32] To settle Galicians particularly in such a manner was a further problem. They were

> ...a people who, less than two generations ago, were serfs of the soil, and who, unfortunately, have not had the opportunities, even if they had the capability, to rise very high above that position today....[They] have been reared under circumstances which did not permit them to know what free government is, who know nothing of free government, except that government is a tyranny. These people, let them be ever so good, cannot be citizens as we would wish them to be citizens.[33]

They were an alien people, whose history demonstrated they were not the type of citizen Canada wanted. Settle Canada with a foreign people and its destiny would be changed.[34] Note that the basis for Oliver's concern was not

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32. Edmonton Bulletin, 30-3-99.

33. House of Commons Debates, col. 2934, 12-4-01.

34. Edmonton Bulletin, 10-1-02.

biological but cultural.

> I am not claiming that we are the best people in the world; that our civilization is the highest form of civilization; but I do claim that our present civilization suits us, and it is that which we have set ourselves to improve. Our social system, our political system, our religious system are those which we have inherited and under which we are trying to improve ourselves. Then if it is worthwhile to order all of these systems for the purpose of improving ourselves in this country, it is surely worthwhile to take means that our efforts shall not be to a certain extent rendered useless by the introduction of an element into our population which will have a contrary effect. It is not necessary to say that such people are not as good as we are. Possibly a Chinaman is better than an Englishman, let the Englishman answer for that himself; a Japanese may be a better man or a Russian may be a better man than the Englishman; I say nothing about that, he maybe a much better man but he is not one of us, and inasmuch as he is not one of us he is not helping us develop along those lines that providence has chosen for us, or that we have chosen for ourselves.[35]

Oliver was concerned that different people would give different results. How to get consistency? Always use the same ingredients.

For various reasons Clifford Sifton, and eastern Canada chose not to use the same ingredients -- those ingredients being eastern Canadians. Instead, they preferred to push for Americans and central and eastern

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35. House of Commons Debates, col. 3739, 29-4-02.

Europeans. Although the number of Canadians who emigrated to the United States did not increase by as great a number as in previous decades, there was still a large and alarming departure (see Appendix, Table 2). The most startling fact was that in 1900 the number of native-born Canadians in the United States was over 25% of the number of native born Canadians in Canada. In dismay, the Bulletin saw the writing on the wall. "Whether right or wrong it is part of the settled policy of the present as it was of the late Dominion government not to endeavour to attract settlers from the older provinces to the West."[36]

A look at the homestead statistics gives a more or less accurate picture of what Oliver and western Canadians saw (see Appendix, Table 3). For the most part, year after year entries by Canadians as a percentage of the whole stayed the same, or decreased, while American entries increased, even surpassing the Canadian entries in 1905 and 1906. However, the statistics which must have drawn the most concern were the increases in the numbers of homestead entries for those from central and eastern Europe, surpassing those from Great Britain in 1897, the first full year of Liberal administration, and remaining ahead of them for six of the seven years prior to 1903. To Oliver, and those who shared his views, this presented a catastrophe of immense proportions. While there was quite

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36. Edmonton Bulletin, 28-8-99.

obviously a significant proportion of eastern Canadians desiring the opportunity to start again, the West was being overrun with foreigners.[37]

Oliver felt the West vitally needed Canadians, first and foremost, as settlers. He believed he was simply stating the facts when, referring to the geographical separateness of the West due to the great unsettled land of northern Ontario, he said in the House,

> Unless that country is settled by our own people, people who are of the same kin as you, who have the same social ideas, the same political institutions, the same political aspirations - unless the country is settled by such people, at least in sufficient numbers to control it, then...you cannot control it, and it will not remain always a part of this Dominion.[38]

Oliver could not understand the attitude which decried the active promotion of Canadian migration to the west. The simple fact was that there was an overflow population in the eastern provinces. Why not channel it to western Canada? The attitude of W.S. Fielding, federal Minister of Finance from Nova Scotia, was indicative of the problem faced. For Fielding, and others who thought like him

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37. While obviously not all of the 1.2 million Canadians in the United States were either involved in agriculture, or even located in the west, no doubt a significant proportion were. And even if they were only looking for opportunity, there was plenty to be found in Canada's west.

38. House of Commons Debates, col. 1957, 24-9-96.

(virtually the whole of the eastern Canadian body politic), such a move would weaken the other parts of Canada.[39] No doubt they most feared the probable loss of votes for the eastern Liberals, and dwindling economic support from the business community as they endured an active campaign to remove their customers. For Oliver this missed the whole point. The five eastern provinces had lost population to the United States for the previous twenty years; it only made sense to direct such emigrants to the west instead of letting them get picked up in a southward current: "...in doing that, let us not think that we are weakening our own country, but rather strengthening it."[40] It appeared as if a strong transcontinental nation was not the country that all Canadians envisioned. It was certainly amazing that Americans were given lower rates than Canadians to get to the Canadian west, while Canadians were given better railway rates to go south to the United States than to go west. It appeared as if there was no place for the Canadian in the West.

> In the administration of Northwest lands every man was given a preference over a Canadian. No wonder Canadians went to the States when they were apparently not wanted in their own country. A case of national hari-

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39. House of Commons Debates, col. 6840, 2-6-98.

40. Ibid.

kari.[41]

No doubt those comments were an exaggeration, but they capture the grievances of Western Canadians. What was worse than Canadians not going west were the all too visible social results of this policy.

The West was filling up, and by the early 1900's, quite rapidly (see Appendix, Table 1). Unfortunately, the population base was changing from British stock to a stew in which large chunks were of a completely foreign nationality.[42] The westerner's worst fears were coming true. The immigrants were not being assimilated. Take Oliver's beloved Edmonton, circa 1904:

> From the sidewalks rose a babble of languages. These varied all the way from the soft accents of negroes coming in to take up the land, to the sing-song of the passing Chinese, and the soft sibilants of Cree-speaking half-breeds. Broad Scotch brogues competed with the idiom of Yorkshire and Lancashire, Cockney dialects challenged the dialects of western, central or southern United States, while on every hand, scores of other immigrants conversed in Scandinavian, Slavic or Germanic tongues.[43]

Noticeably absent were the tones of eastern Canadians. The retention of language was probably indicative of the

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41. Edmonton Bulletin, 24-10-98.

42. Friesen, Canadian Prairies, p. 272.

43. MacGregor, Edmonton, p. 142.

retention of culture. The fact was that the homogeneity that was Edmonton no longer existed. In six short years Edmonton's face of sharp Anglo-Saxon features was dulled by the foreign onslaught.[44] There was no doubt in Oliver's mind that the fears of the impossibility of assimilation, the loss of institutions, the clipping of a growing society in the bud, were justified.

Something had gone wrong. The Liberals were elected, voted for by western Canadians as a defensive act against the Conservative Government, perceived by westerners as necessary for their region's continued survival.[45] Sifton was to be their savior, the man entrusted with all their hopes and dreams. He let them down. Elected as a representative of western Canada, Sifton proved to be an easterner in disguise. Perhaps his successful immigration policy was to be his job application for the leadership of the Liberal party. Sure of his support in western Canada, and needing to get it in the east, he peopled the west with those whom the east considered desirable, those of economic value. Personally, for Sifton it never worked out. For the West it seemed equally a failure. Oliver was livid.

We did not go out to that country

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44. Betke, "The Development of Urban Community", p. 49.

45. Canada, Parliament, House of Commons Debates, col. 152, 25-8-96.

> simply to produce wheat. We went to build up a nation, a civilization, a social system that we could enjoy, be proud of and transmit to our children; and we resent the idea of having the millstone of this [undesirable] population hung around our necks in our efforts to build up, beautify and improve that country, and so improve the whole of Canada.[46]

Four years after he made this statement Frank Oliver became the Minister of the Interior, and was given a real chance to actually do something about it. Only then were the views and aspirations of western Canada truly represented in the halls of power.

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46. House of Commons Debates, col. 2939, 12-4-01.

Chapter II

The National Mood

The study of immigration policy presents difficult problems and widely varying opinions. It is important for the reader to note that the values and ideas presented here were, for the most part, the prevailing attitudes of mainstream Canadian society in the Victorian and Edwardian ages. They were found in the newspapers and in the speeches of the elected representatives of the populace. They reflect, at least in part, the cultural values of English Canada. Certainly those values may at times seem hypocritical, based on ignorance and rumor, and questionable to a person of the later twentieth century. However, what is attempted herein is not to justify these values, but to understand and explain them.

The world of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was markedly different from that of today. As far as immigration is concerned two influences were of fundamental importance. One was the nature and impact of imperialism. Britain was basking in the warmest rays of Empire, and enjoying the role of unquestioned world leader, the nation that brought its civilizing influence to all corners of the world. She had, in the minds of her subjects, forged the greatest Empire in history through her institutions, and the efforts of her subjects. The

collective mind of English Canada seriously questioned neither what the role of Canada was to be in that Empire, nor how that role was to be fulfilled. As one of the oldest members of that Empire, Canada saw herself as an integral link in the imperial chain. Canadians had a duty to do their part to ensure the continued existence of the Empire. Between Canada and Britain there existed a filial relationship in which loyalty and value were unquestioned.

The second important factor to be kept in mind is that, grand as the imperial vision was, it was also often parochial in nature. While the transportation boom of the later nineteenth century rapidly connected the corners of the world, the contacts between cultures were only just being initiated, and ignorance was the norm. Understanding would take many more years of communication and association. Many of the immigrants coming to Canada were completely alien to British and French Canadians. After 1896 their immigration was in comparatively larger numbers. The question of their assimilability created threats to the dominant cultures. Canadians had never seen such people with their strange customs, their undecipherable languages, their unfamiliar foods. Given the newness of these other cultures and peoples, understanding, and the tolerance that comes from such, was an impossibility. The immigrants also experienced cultural shock which compounded this problem. When this is seen in

the light of the acknowledged pre-eminence of British culture, it cannot be expected that Canadians would have looked upon new and different peoples with anything less than an assurance of Imperial superiority. Naturally, the less British were the ways of a foreigner, or his country, or his history, the greater the questions as to his value in helping to build Canada, and strengthen the Empire.

The prejudice often surrounding immigrants has given rise to a sometimes confusing terminology. Ethnocentrism, xenophobia, racism and nativism are terms with varying connotations depending on the speaker or writer. Further, some have also changed in meaning over time. What is here presented is a composite of different authors' interpretations, which constitute the meanings of the terms in this thesis. It is also well to note that often the context in which an author or speaker of the early 1900's has used the term makes its definition self-evident, and perhaps different from what is offered here. Ethnocentrism implies choice based on culture. It is the name for the view of things "...in which one's group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it."[1] As such it is ingrained, the compilation of generations of unconscious thought. It is a

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[1] William G. Sumner, Folkways: A Study of the Sociological Importance of Usages, Manners Customs, Mores and Morals (1906; reprint ed., Boston: Ginn and Company, 1940), p. 13.

defensive response and does not reflect conscious prejudice. "The fact is adequately explained by the principles of ease, least effort, congeniality [in being in our own class or group] and pride in one's own culture."[2]

Intimately connected with ethnocentrism is xenophobia. This is a "...distrust of strangers because of the fear that they pose a threat to the culture of the natives, [and it] is endemic to most societies."[3] If the fear of imminent change is intense enough, a strongly ethnocentric individual, having no desire to see his society influenced by an alien person, or that person's values, would certainly manifest such distrust as is inherent in xenophobia.

The antithesis to ethnocentrism is racism. Racism usually implies choice based on biological traits. Those that use the term often speak of blood or genetics. It is the simplest way to identify a group, and therefore facilitates stereotyping. "It [has] the stamp of biological finality, and [spares] people the pains of examining the complex economic, cultural, political and psychological conditions that enter into group

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[2] Gordon W. Allport, The Nature of Prejudice (Cambridge: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1954), p. 19.

[3] Thomas J. Curran, Xenophobia and Immigration, 1820-1930 (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1975), p. 12.

relations."[4] However, race as a term at the turn of the century more often than not denoted what was culturally inherent in an individual. It is important to note that race did not usually imply the biological connotation of racism.

While the term nativism has enjoyed use by some who study the history of immigration, it has a confusing, if often elusive, definition. This makes its value somewhat questionable. John Higham defines it as "...intense opposition to an internal minority on the grounds of its foreign connections."[5] For Higham, it is intimately connected with anti-Catholicism, a fear of foreign radicals, and racial nationalism. Such sentiments arise when the dominant culture is threatened, fearing its inability to assimilate foreigners. A rising tide of nationalism surges over all who may be different in an attempt to protect the host culture. Howard Palmer defines it as "...merely a sub-category of white' racial superiority...shared by many peoples of northern European background who were not Anglo-Saxons but nevertheless had a belief in the superiority of northern Europeans over

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[4] Allport, The Nature of Prejudice, p. xv.

[5] John Higham, Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925 (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1955), p. 4.

'non-preferred' continental Europeans, Asians and blacks."[6] He further states that it is an overlapping of nationalism and ethnic, religious and racial prejudices, and that it has a strong xenophobic basis.[7] Nativism seems to attempt to cover the very grey and fuzzy area between ethnocentrism and racism, incorporating the ideas of choice based on biology and culture. In attempting to define this murky area the definition becomes too broad, unmanageable, and unsatisfactory. Given that the other terms presented are not only more easily understood, but also sufficent for the needs of this thesis, nativism will not further be used.

The mind-set of the Victorian British rested heavily on the twin pillars of ethnocentrism and xenophobia. These ideologies were all the more powerful in the minds of those living away from the security of the Mother Country, struggling to build a nation in her mould. This was not an easy task at the turn of the twentieth century. The world of Canadians was changing at a tremendous rate, and, in the eyes of contemporaries, many of those changes were not perceived to be for the best. The urban problems of slums, vice, and sanitation grew with the cities. Rural depopulation became a important concern. Societal roles

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[6] Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1982), p. 169.

[7] Ibid., pps. 8, 169.

were being restructured as women demanded the right to vote and the power that came with it. New technology in industry altered traditional roles in labour. However, the most visible change was the increase in immigrants of foreign nationalities.[8] In 1898 24.7% of immigrants were neither British nor American.[9] By 1900-01 it was 39.4%. In concrete numbers, in 1898, 8,827 were neither British nor American, while by 1900-01 the number was 19,284. Even more dramatically, by 1904-05 while the percentage was down to 25.5, the number was 37,255. No doubt more importantly to Oliver, the proportion of foreigners in Western Canada was higher than the national level. The physical face of Canada was quite obviously changing. It was quite natural that fears and hostilities swelled with

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[8] The 1901 and 1911 figures for the origins of the Canadian populace show the total change in society was small.

	1901		1911	
Britain	3,063,195	57.0%	3,896,985	54.1%
N. Europe	2,053,945	38.2%	2,685,588	37.3%
S. Europe	37,623	0.7%	221,228	3.1%
Asia	22,050	0.4%	39,137	0.5%
Total	5,371,315		7,206,643	

Totals do not equal 100% because of numbers of Indians, Blacks and Jews.

N. Europe includes French, Belgian, German, Dutch, Scandinavian, and Swiss.

S. Europe includes Austro-Hungary, Rumanian, Bulgarian, Greek, Italian, Polish and Turkish.

Asia includes Chinese, Japanese, and Hindu.

Fifth Census of Canada, vol. 2, 1911, p. 367. Also see Appendix, Table 1.

[9] These figures are from Sessional Papers, 189, no. 17a; and Immigration Facts and Figures, pps. 6-9.

the number of immigrants. No longer was the native Canadian dealing with the immigrant as an abstract entity of which he could for the most part only read in the newspaper or in exotic travelogues. What effect would this have on the nation? Would the foundations of Canadian society -- values, institutions, structures -- also change due to the addition of these new and unknown components? Many feared that this would be the case.

As the native Canadian increasingly came face to face with the foreigner, the problem of immigration was reduced to a personal level. It was all well and good to support an open-door immigration policy designed to fill up the West, but when foreigners began to live down the street, or in the next neighbourhood, when questions of sanitation and morality as to their living conditions arose, when reports told of the infectious diseases they were said to have brought with them, or when they began taking one's job, or one's friend's job, for half the pay, curiosity rapidly turned to fear and anger. The immigrants suffering the brunt of the hostility were those most visible or obviously different: for example, the Oriental, the East Indian, the black, the Southeastern European, the Doukhobors and the Mormons.[10] A description of the mainstream perceptions held regarding some of the more

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[10] Although many immigrant groups could be studied, these alone are chosen mainly because Oliver's comments most often concerned them.

controversial of these groups is enlightening, especially when compared to similar descriptions of the British, and Americans, today popularly considered to have been desirable en masse. It becomes evident that Frank Oliver, as a private Member of Parliament and as the Minister of the Interior held views that were for the most part a reflection of those of the typical Canadian -- a combination of ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and frustration at having to watch the changing world while being able to do so little about it. Though the typical Canadian's overriding concern about immigration was cultural, one has to acknowledge that racism, in this age of change and strangeness, was utilized as a scale of judgement. However, it is also clear that without needing or attempting to resort to racial justification there were numerous reasons for believing certain immigrants less desirable and calling for their restriction. This is especially obvious when one compares the qualities that made the British and American immigrants desirable with the qualities of other immigrant groups.

British

> ...I think that in this part of the British domain it is only fair and reasonable that, other things being equal, we should look to the British immigrant as being the most desirable, and when we can secure them we are

doing our duty to our country. [11]

This is a view expressed often by Frank Oliver in his lifetime.[12] It was shared by many Canadians. J.S. Woodsworth, whose opinions reflected those of Protestant Canada, spoke of the country as "...this part of the Greater Britain beyond the seas," and suggested that the nation "...need[ed] more of our own blood to assist us to maintain in Canada our British traditions and to mould the incoming armies of foreigners into loyal British subjects."[13] The Liberal Toronto Globe pointed out that "those who come from Great Britain do not as a rule need naturalization, and they can at once lawfully participate in the work of governing the country."[14] The British were role models for the average Canadian who was proud of his British traditions and Canada's role in the Empire. Many middle and upper class Canadians looked to those recently arrived from the Mother Country as the standard by which

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[11] Canada, Parliament, House of Commons Debates, 1906-07, col. 6168, 9-4-07.

[12] See, for examples, Canada, Parliament, House of Commons Debates, 1907-08, col. 1325, 15-1-08; 1903, col. 6566, 14-7-03.

[13] James S. Woodsworth, Strangers within our Gates, with a Foreward by Marilyn Barber, The Social History of Canada Series (1909; reprint ed., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), p. 46.

[14] Toronto Globe, 5-5-10.

tastes should be be measured.[15] Canada was a British nation and desired to remain such. Given this view, many did not even consider the British to be immigrants.[16]

Despite mainstream support for British immigration, reservations were voiced. Such opinions reflected the important economic role of the immigrant, and the emergence of a Canadian identity that was more than a mere reflection of British society. There was candid concern, especially in Western Canada, that seemed to suggest a rising groundswell against the English immigrant. Some Canadians began to feel that "...Englishmen were snobs and trouble-makers in the community and worthless as farmers or farm hands."[17] The simple occasional emergence of signs declaring that "No English need apply" was significant of changing attitudes. The Canadian Annual Review (C.A.R.) of 1906 stated that "the arrival of so many Englishmen aroused the old-time controversy about the alleged unadaptability of their characters...."[18] The following year, the C.A.R., suggested that problems had arisen because some of the recent British immigrants came

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[15] Howard Palmer, "Responses to Foreign Immigration: Nativism and Ethnic Tolerance in Alberta, 1880-1920." (M.A. thesis , University of Alberta, 1971), p. 45.

[16] Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p. 24.

[17] Ibid., p. 24.

[18] Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1907, p. 281. Hereafter cited as C.A.R.

> marked by all the characteristics of their nation and with faults, in some cases, which met very sharply certain prejudices and ignorances which Canadians occasionally possess and vigorously express. Many of the Englishmen came expecting too much... naturally ignorant of conditions in a country of vast expanses and infinite variety of climates...ignorant of the hostility of labour unions to an influx of possible competition, naturally unacquainted with customs and social ways in a country where everything was different from their own surroundings at home....[19]

The author went on to state that there were further problems with the "black sheep" of English families, often forced to emigrate to Canada as remittance men and ne'er-do-wells who possessed few qualifications for employment and stiff British traditions to which they clung as if life preservers. Seeking and expecting in Canada another Great Britain, the British immigrant was presented with a diverse country described as more like the United States.[20]

The Conservative Daily Province of Vancouver complained about the number of immigrants from urban Britain. "Canada is anxious to have British immigrants, but we want the hardy and robust class from the rural districts or those who have sufficient capital to assure

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[19] C.A.R., 1907, p. 291.

[20] Ibid., p. 292.

their future."[21] Clifford Sifton was not a great advocate of the English immigrant as the man best suited to build the Canadian West, and his paper, the Manitoba Free Press, reflected this view.[22] Even the Edmonton Bulletin stated that there was a basis for the advertisement "...because the class of Englishmen who have come to Canada have not always been of a character calculated to earn a high reputation for workmanship for the British workman."[23] The Bulletin editorial concluded that if the immigrant was qualified and could adapt to Canadian societal and industrial conditions, no other immigrant was more desirable. These attitudes regarding British immigration are important because they demonstrate that there was no blind acceptance of the British in Canada. This would lead one to believe that even for the British, racial characteristics were not the dominant factor in determining desirability. Rather, as in the case of most immigrant groups, cultural adaptibility, social contribution and economic considerations were of primary importance.

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21 Vancouver Daily Province, 18-5-09.

22 D.J. Hall, Clifford Sifton: A Lonely Eminence, 1901-1929 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985), p. 73; Manitoba Free Press (Winnipeg), 29-3-10.

23 Edmonton Bulletin, 27-7-06.

Americans

For the bulk of Canadians the white American immigrant was, after the British, the most preferred. Frank Oliver was quite impressed by them. "They are people of intelligence, of energy, of enterprise, of the highest aspiration. They speak the same language, they worship in the same churches, they have the same political ideals...."[24] The majority of the American immigrants were tenant farmers who came from the north central states. Seeking a more profitable and secure future, they came to Canada desiring their own land, and the opportunity to exercise a say in their lives.[25] Not only did American immigrants have farming experience, but they possessed more cash and effects than any other immigrant group. In 1910 the United States Commissioner of Immigration stated that in the previous year 95,000 emigrants left for Canada, each averaging $1000 in cash. Since 1897, $520,830,000 in cash had gone with Americans to Canada. Stock and effects averaged much more.[26] The experience and the equipment meant that Americans could begin farming

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[24] House of Commons Debates, col. 6566, 14-7-03. The question of black American immigration will be discussed later.

[25] Karel Bicha, "Canadian Immigration Policy and the American Farmer, 1896-1914" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1963), pps. 113, 116.

[26] C.A.R., 1910, p. 387; Bicha, "Canadian Immigration Policy and the American Farmer, 1896-1914", p. 116.

upon their arrival. The cash enabled them to also have an immediate impact on the economy. Their economic desirability was rarely questioned.

Some were less convinced about their cultural desirability. James S. Woodsworth felt them to be mostly settlers worth having, but, he added, "of course, they are not British subjects, and some of them rather do object to acknowledging allegiance to King Edward VII."[27] He was confident, however, because the King lived far away, that American immigrants would soon be good Canadian citizens, and their children loyal British subjects. Still, there was cause to worry when the C.A.R. proclaimed that Canadians "...were Americans in personal character and habits."[28] A fear voiced by some in central Canada was the possibility that the country, especially Western Canada where Americans proportionately settled in larger numbers, might be so influenced by them as to alter the institutions of Canada, or perhaps even leading to annexation sentiment. This concern led to a number of Western Canadian editorials counselling calm to the older provinces. The Vancouver Daily Province stated that any suggestions of annexation put forward by American papers "...was but a wish or a bit of optimistic persiflage not a deduction from known facts," and that Americans in Canada

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[27] Woodsworth, Strangers within our Gates, p. 65.

[28] C.A.R., 1907, p. 291.

"...are careful not to risk their new political standing by conspiring with it."[29]

Speaking about similar articles, the Edmonton Bulletin suggested Eastern Canadian papers should be less touchy about "...the vaporings of such babblers."[30] Granted, the American was attached to his native institutions, but the Bulletin felt that the attachment was not blind fanaticism, and believed that they were open-minded as to the merits of other institutions. In case they were not, however, the East could count on Western papers to be on the watch for any signs of disloyalty. The Conservative Calgary Herald assured the rest of Canada and the world that Western Canada was still very British. For the Herald, it was significant that many of the American immigrants were themselves only recent arrivals to the United States: "The national institutions have not as profound meaning, and the national boundary has been less precise to them than to men whose traditions point to Bunker Hill and to Washington....He came west for bread, and not for liberty; he will come into Canada if there is more bread, regardless of the national flag or traditions."[31] Such avid defence of the American immigrant suggests that they, too, had their detractors; yet,

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[29] Vancouver Daily Province, 24-1-11.

[30] Edmonton Bulletin, 16-10-06.

[31] Calgary Herald, 17-5-06.

concerns over their undesirability were based, not on race, but on political and cultural differences.

Galician

Frank Oliver's opposition to Galician (or Ukranian) immigration has been discussed in Chapter I. After he became Minister of the Interior his disapproval became less vocal, perhaps a result of the necessary tongue-tightening such a position of responsibility entails, or possibly because, after ten years, there were gradual advances apparent in the economic contributions of the Galicians, and some signs of their assimilation. Though Oliver did not feel that these were the least desirable immigrants, he never believed that they could contribute as much to the building of Canada as could some other groups.[32] It has been asserted that the hostility to these immigrants could not be attributed to any economic considerations, as they contributed significantly to the West's economic prosperity.[33] As far as their economic circumstances are concerned, this assertion misses the point. Practically all those who arrived did so with very

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[32] Canada, Parliament, House of Commons Debates, 1909-10, col. 1565, 15-12-09.

[33] Palmer, "Responses to Foreign Immigration: Nativism and Ethnic Tolerance in Alberta, 1880-1920" (M.A. thesis University of Alberta, 1971), p. 97.

little or no capital.[34] Given the fact that they were destitute, the possibility that they would remain public burdens once in Canada was a reality to be dealt with. Much of the money they earned in their first years in Canada was sent home, and used both to support family members there, and to transport them to Canada. Canadian Farmer estimated that from 1898 to 1903 Galicians numbering 60,000 divested Canada of $1,000,000 in this manner, thereby disrupting the Canadian economy to that extent.[35] In light of what they generated for the economy, this was not an overwhelming amount; however many perceived it to be such. While it is true that the Government's plan in part was to use these immigrants to perform the more menial tasks of building the country, usually involving work at low paying transportation and resource sector jobs, it was also desired that the money they earned from this labour be saved and used to enable them to start as soon as possible to become independent farmers.

The Government may not have been overly concerned with Galician immigrants working in the labour force for an extended period, as this helped feed the voraciously

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[34] Robert England, The Colonization of Western Canada (1896-1934 (London: P.S. King and Son, Ltd., 1936), p. 208.

[35] As quoted from Vera Lysenko, Men in Sheepskin Coats: A Study in Assimilation (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1947), p. 44.

booming economy. Employers probably were quite content with a large, cheap, and relatively docile labour pool. Canadian labour, whether organized or not, was blunt in its desire to have such immigration halted. Galician immigrants not only helped lower wages by their willingness to work for less, but they were often used as strike-breakers.[36] Whether they were manipulated or not is irrelevant here; for many Canadians, these Galicians were competition, pure and simple. As such, many considered them undesirable as immigrants.

In the main, economic considerations were not the most commonly voiced objection to Galician immigration. Most who stated an opinion had cultural concerns. Upon arriving "...they re-established much of their previous way of life, including Ukranian style houses, tools and clothes and most of their social patterns."[37] Of course, this was by necessity the way that any immigrant group, including the British, would originally organize themselves. However, alien patterns dotting the urban and rural landscapes were cause for anxiety. From their lifestyles it appeared to some observers that Canadian society was virtually opposite to Galician. James S. Woodsworth suggested a prevailing view when he reasoned

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[36] Ibid. p. 93.

[37] Palmer, "Responses to Foreign Immigration: Nativism and Ethnic Tolerance in Alberta, 1880-1920", p. 99.

that "centuries of poverty and oppression have, to some extent, animalized him."[38] Though the Galician was an eager worker and desirous of becoming Canadianized, Woodsworth had more confidence in the second generation becoming good Canadians. Others intimate with Galicians estimated that their integration would take at least three generations.[39] In 1918, J.T.M. Anderson pointed out some of the problems as he saw them:

> Owing to the sudden change from autocracy to democracy; owing to the rapid and thoughtless manner in which we have on a wholesale plan "made" Canadian citizens of these newcomers; owing to the power we have granted them by the almost eager bestowal of the franchise; owing to this sudden change of conditions the poor illiterate Slavic peasant has become overwhelmed with Canadian "freedom," and it is small wonder that he begins to look rather lightly upon our laws and institutions, and disrespect for law is too often the inevitable result.[40]

It was seen by many as simply not wise to rapidly expose these people to the responsibilities of democracy. Anderson, like others, felt that after their children had been educated they would be good Canadians.

The Calgary Herald's criticism of Galician immigration also reflected cultural and economic

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[38] Woodsworth, Strangers within our Gates, p. 112.

[39] W.A. Griesbach, I Remember (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1946), p. 219.

[40] J.T.M. Anderson, The Education of the New Canadian (Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1918), p. 54.

considerations. It is well to note that if the Conservative Herald could have criticised the Galician on any basis -- including racism -- it would have, if only to score political points at the expense of the Government. In one 1906 editorial it pointed out their poverty and strange living habits on their original arrival in the West, but also gave them full credit for the "wonderful rapidity" of their improvements, describing advances in farming and industry in their small communities. It, too suggested that the education of the children of these immigrants was essential in manifesting the potential this group had to become good Canadians.[41]

Ralph Connor, best-selling novelist of the period, mirrored in The Foreigner the popular perception of these immigrants as victims of the generationally inbred docile and subservient instincts of slavery. To be able to contribute in Canada, their only hope lay in assimilation, if indeed they could be assimilated. In the novel, Connor portrays an unscrupulous and dictatorial Russian immigrant who has easily placed a number of Galician immigrants under his thumb. However, with the young Galician daughter's Canadianization, his unease increases. "He had an instinctive feeling that this was the beginning of an emancipation that would one day leave him without his

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[41] Calgary Herald, 21-6-06.

slaves...they would demand money for their toil."[42]

A number of important concerns are clear. Could these people understand the rudiments of Canadian society and institutions? If they could be assimilated, how long would it take? What effect would they have on Canadian society during the process of assimilation? Racial considerations were not the mainstream criticism of Galicians. This group of immigrants was gradually more accepted by the public after their arrival, once they had shown the contribution they could make, displayed qualities of industry and ambition, and demonstrated their desire to become Canadianized. Before their acceptance by most Canadians they had to go through an acculturation process and prove that they would be valuable members of Canadian society. Prior to this, opposition to Galicians was founded in xenophobia and ethnocentrism.

Doukhobor

In their attempt to escape Russian religious persecution, Doukhobors first immigrated to Canada in 1898-99. Not brought in as part of the general immigration policy, some 7,400 were granted special privileges, allowed to settle in a block near Yorkton, Saskatchewan, granted the liberty of not serving in the military, and

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[42] Ralph Connor, The Foreigner (Toronto: The Westminster Company, Ltd., 1909), p. 162.

were permitted to forgo the education other Canadians were required to undertake.[43] As a result of their situation in Russia, many Canadians originally felt sympathy for their plight. Several of the Canadian sympathizers were to be found in the Department of the Interior, and the Canadian Pacific Railway.[44] However, Frank Oliver was not among them. It was his belief

> that any people who are too good to conform to the laws of this country are too good to live in this country, and we do not want them at any price...I am given to understand that the Doukhobors resent the suggestion of becoming citizens and are not willing to conform to the laws and customs of the country.[45]

The Doukhobors were originally supposed to settle near Edmonton, and it is also likely that Oliver was against their immigration because one large block of foreigners--the Galicians.-- near the town was already too much. In any event, they were settled in Saskatchewan.

By 1902, when a fringe sect of the Doukhobors began their nude march to Winnipeg, the Bulletin, in a mixture

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[43] House of Commons Debates, 1906-07, col. 6157, 9-4-07,; Robert C. Brown, and Ramsay Cook, Canada 1896-1921 A Nation Transformed (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1974), p. 63; D.J. Hall, Clifford Sifton: A Lonely Eminence, 1901-1929 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985), p. 266.

[44] Palmer, "Responses to Foreign Immigration: Nativism and Ethnic Tolerance in Alberta, 1880-1920", p. 111.

[45] House of Commons Debates, col. 2937, 012-p 12-4-01.

of anger and smugness, informed everyone that the secret was out. "They have shown themselves to be nuisances personally, socially, and politically. Such people as this country has no room or use for." Just as Oliver predicted, the Doukhobors remained separate from Canadian society, in great part because of the privileges granted them.[46] Oliver's concern was how to make Canadians of such an isolated and foreign group. The nation was not to be built on special treatment to specific groups, but on equality to all. If any special treatment was required, or if groups could not be made Canadians, they were certainly not desirable.

Canadians' perception of the Doukhobors reflected this view. Many saw the peculiar people described by James S. Woodsworth, understood by none, remnants of the thirteenth century, and happy to remain such in the twentieth. Their closely knit and inwardly focused communities initiated xenophobic rumors as to their lifestyles.[47] In the years following 1899, the Doukhobors' alien tendencies became more exposed, and fears of their unassimilability became reality. Statements coming from Parliament, referring to them as "semi-civilize[d]" and "immorally indecent" became increasingly indicative of the

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[46] Edmonton Bulletin, 14-11-02.

[47] Woodsworth, Strangers within our Gates, pps. 96, 100.

feelings and views of Canadians.[48] This added to the significant number of Canadians who were in agreement with Oliver. While ten years of living in Canada had done little to change the Doukhobor way of life, it had closely magnified the differences between them and other Canadians.

The Liberal press was often quiet on the matter of the Doukhobors, especially when the immigrants' excesses came to the fore. Such incidents would usually be portrayed as isolated, and not reflective of community standards at large.[49] Their silence could often be traced to the fact that that segment of the press had usually supported the Doukhobors in their quest for religious freedom in the late 1890's, and had argued in favour of their immigration to Canada. Perhaps more important was the fact that a Liberal Government had brought the Doukhobors to Canada, and the Liberal press had no desire to be critical of its own. In any case, not all hearts so easily bled. The Conservative Halifax Herald placed the blame for the Doukhobor fiasco, which had culminated in the trek of October and November of 1902, squarely on Sifton's shoulders. He had demonstrated incompetence and a profound neglect of duty in choosing these fanatics and

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[48] House of Commons Debates, 1909-10, cols., 5504, 5544, 14-3-10.

[49] Manitoba Free Press (Winnipeg), 10-11-02; Toronto Globe, 11-11-02.

maniacs, shackled by religious dementia, who refused to even "obey the most fundamental laws of human society" as desirable future Canadians.[50] Certainly they might be objects for Canadian pity, declared the Conservative Vancouver Daily Province, but their actions could not be condoned. They did not possess the qualities -- civility, enterprise, foresight, frugality, sanity -- necessary for the building of good Canadians. Like others, the Daily Province used what it saw as the inevitable compounding of Doukhobor failings, as witnessed in the trek, as ammunition to demand more careful selection, and more rigid restriction in matters of immigration policy.[51]

The original objection to the Doukhobors, that they would not accept and conform to Canadian ways, just as they remained intransigent to Russian actions to assimilate them, had become manifest. Of course, Canadians should have expected that because the Doukhobor escape from Russia was motivated by a desire to avoid all external attemps at assimilation. Indeed, Canada was chosen as the country to which to emigrate because of guarantees that such external pressures would not be exerted. Still, it came as a surprise that some of the Doukhobor numbers quickly demonstrated that they did not desire to change, to become Canadians. Few objections

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[50] Halifax Herald, 3-11-02, 5-11-02.

[51] Vancouver Daily Province, 1-11-02, 6-11-02.

justifying their exclusion on racial grounds had ever been voiced. Rather, it was most definitely cultural considerations which led most to call for restrictions on their immigration to Canada. Although it was perhaps too late to do anything about this particular case, beyond letting no more Doukhobors immigrate, it was successfully used to help to pressure the Government to tighten immigration policy.[52]

Asiatic

Asiatic immigration tended to fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Labour. A Royal Commission to study the subject, and the causes of the anti-Asiatic riots in Vancouver in 1907, was headed by the Deputy Minister of Labour, William Lyon Mackenzie King. No doubt the Commission fell into the lap of the Department of Labour because of the assumption that the riots were economically motivated by the labour situation. Bills regarding Oriental immigration usually did not originate from the Department of the Interior. However, orders in council affecting such immigration sometimes came from Frank Oliver's Department, and some discussion on the subject is therefore necessary. Oliver was opposed to

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[52] When Oliver became Minister of the Interior, he did terminate the Doukhobor communal lifestyle by forcing them to choose between filing for individual homesteads or relinquishing their right to the land they were using. Edmonton Bulletin, 9-5-07.

Asiatic immigration in large numbers. In his opposition to this group, the Japanese in particular, there can be no denying that Oliver's justification was based partially on racial considerations. He sympathized with concerns in British Columbia to keep the province a white man's country.[53] It is important to note, here, that the term "white" was often used, judging by its context, as a generic term for people who held the values of the dominant white society. This did not preclude the exclusion of those white people who did not share those values (such as the Slavs). Oliver was also concerned about the sudden large influx of Japanese in the years 1904 to 1908 when their numbers increased dramatically from none to 7,601 a year. By 1908 over 12,000 Japanese had immigrated to Canada, while before 1903 there had been virtually none.[54] Though the number may seem small, the Japanese were highly concentrated and visible. Oliver, reflecting the popular xenophobia, noted that perhaps some sinister force lay behind this sudden increase, with an ultimate aim of taking control of Canada. After all, the population of Japan was substantially greater than Canada's.[55]

The echoes of this concern rang throughout Canadian

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[53] Edmonton Bulletin, 31-8-07.

[54] Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 6.

[55] Edmonton Bulletin, 31-8-07.

society. Mackenzie King focused on it in his report on Oriental immigration. "What [continued Oriental immigration into British Columbia] mean[s] will be better realized by contrasting the almost fabulously huge population of the Orient [800,000,000] with the thin line of white men [200,000] representing Christian civilization on the Pacific coast of Canada." The result of his investigation was the restriction of this immigration, "...afford[ing] to the Canadian people an assurance that their institutions will be fully safeguarded in so far as immigration from the Orient [was] concerned."[56] It is significant that Mackenzie King focused on the threat to civilization -- to culture. The fear of a great influx was all the more terrifying when it is realized that the prevailing view was that the Oriental could not be assimilated.[57] He conformed neither culturally nor racially. And it was further assumed that while he could never racially assimilate, like the Doukhobor he would never culturally assimilate. Frederick D. Monk, the Member of Parliament from Jacques Cartier (Quebec), and oft-times Conservative immigration critic, suggested one possible reason why.

> I am informed that Orientals coming

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[56] Canada, Department of Labour, Sessional Papers, 1909, no. 36, pps. 94, 11.

[57] Woodsworth, Strangers within our Gates, p. 155; Vancouver Daily Province, 9-9-07.

> here cannot become legally and absolutely naturalized British subjects. For instance, a Japanese coming here would be prepared, when the time came, to go through the formality of endorsation. He would then be entitled to the rights of every one of us, but he does that as a formality. He cannot, according to the dictates of his conscience and according to the principles which he holds dearest to his heart, change his allegiance. Is that a desirable kind of immigrant for this country?[58]

For the majority, however, the Japanese simply seemed too different to ever become assimilated.

A significant factor contributing to the objections to Japanese immigration was economic.[59] An historian has stated that the popularly held contemporary belief was that "...Japanese laborers [were] reportedly able to live off the smell of a greasy rag," and that this helped contribute to the Vancouver riots of September, 1907.[60] While the former part of the statement is obviously an exaggeration, its importance cannot be underestimated. The Japanese performed the most grinding tasks of labour, and were exploited upon their arrival, especially in the

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[58] House of Commons Debates, 1909, col., 6166, 10-5-09.

[59] Some British Columbia papers, in the heart, and heat, of the situation, were vehemently racist. See, for example, the Daily Province of 9-9-07. Of corse, xenophobia was running at a fevered pitch there.

[60] Robin W. Winks, The Blacks in Canada, A History (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1971), p. 300.

industries of railroad construction and placer mining.[61] Their pay was meager; in 1907-08 railroad labourers received about $1.50 a day.[62] Even more frequently than was the case with Galician labourers, the Japanese were usually single, and sent money home. Also similarly, wages paid to Canadian workers were reduced wherever the Japanese worked. Canadians criticized Japanese immigration on the basis that it hurt native labour, and that, in siphoning off money from the country, it was parasitical. All the while the Japanese, like the Galicians, contributed to the construction of Canada. That this appears hypocritical hardly matters. The loss of a job or lower wages were much more concrete on an individual level to the typical Canadian than the blasting of a railway tunnel somewhere in the Rockies. With increasing numbers of foreign labourers, the native worker could not forsee prosperous times.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier realized that the much lower standard of living of the Japanese "made it impossible for the classes [native Canadian and Japanese] to be brought into competition with each other, without producing social

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[61] Donald Avery, "Dangerous Foreigners" European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1979), p.7; Mary Q. Innis, An Economic History of Canada 3rd ed. (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1935), p. 271.

[62] Innis, An Economic History of Canada, p. 106.

unrest among the labouring classes...."[63] The Toronto Globe stated,

> Confronted by such an influx and realizing its possible effects on the rewards of labor and the standard of living, it is inevitable that the discontent of the producing classes of the West should be sufficiently strong to create a serious and even dangerous disintegrating influence. They feel the sacrifice involved is greater than they should be called upon to make....[64]

The C.A.R. of 1907 suggested that there need be no problem in British Columbia whatsoever if the numbers of English labouring immigrants to that province were increased. However, "...this was not acceptable to the Labour unions and was not vigorously pressed as a Provincial policy."[65] From this comment we can infer that Labour was against all immigration regardless of race because it would result in competition. It is also clear that Labour's influence in Government was less than that of business, because, to the benefit of the latter and to the detriment of the former, the cheapest source of labour ended up coming into the province.

Various secondary factors contributed to the discrimination against the Japanese. Their close visible connection, physically and economically, with the Chinese

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63 Wilfrid Laurier Papers (Public Archives of Canada, 1973), c-1173, p. 217,933.

64 Toronto Globe, 3-9-07.

65 C.A.R., 1907, p. 383.

led many to believe that both shared similar values. The Chinese were considered inferior to the Japanese, and were deplored for their use of opium, alleged abuse of women and children, gambling, and the supposed all-around detrimental influence that they had on society in general.[66] There were concerns raised as to reports of diseases such as leprosy and smallpox running rampant in the Orient, and the need to prohibit the entry of the carriers of such diseases.[67] Perhaps one of the most important contributing factors was that similar problems existed in the United States, which affected the actions taken and the attitudes formed in Canada.[68]

From the preceding it is clear that Frank Oliver's views on immigration and Canadian society were not unique. For him and others, the justification for the restriction of various immigrant groups or individuals tended to transcend race, and focus on much more personal issues: community, employment, health. A selective immigration policy was defended on the basis of such matters as culture, economics, and urban problems. And furthering the

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[66] Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p. 34; also Sessional Papers, Department of Labour, 041-p no. 36, pps. 95, 105.

[67] House of Commons Debates, 1905, cols. 9232, 9237, 11-7-05; also Palmer, "Responses to Foreign Immigration: Nativism and Ethnic Tolerance in Alberta, 1880-1920", p. 44.

[68] C.A.R., 1907, p. 383; also Vancouver Daily Province, 1-2-09.

call for selective immigration was the rapidly changing--not necessarily for the better -- society. People struck out at the most visible agent of that undesirable change. The rationalization that correlated the rising number of immigrants after 1896 and the swift changes since then came easily. For a great many, then, immigration was seen as the central agent of transformation. This attitude fanned the flames of xenophobia. With Canadians unwilling to blame themselves for undesirable changes, the alien immigrant who acted differently, who worked for less, or who possibly brought disease became the scapegoat. Ethnocentrically, Canadians believed that only those who met their cultural standards were desirable, for only they would not be a threat, and further alter Canadian society. To achieve a policy that would protect society by fostering Canadian ideals and shielding it from alien ones, the nation called for a much more restrictive and selective immigration policy.

Chapter III

"...a brake upon the wheel"

The Immigration Act of 1906

Frank Oliver was Minister of the Interior from April, 1905 until the defeat of the Liberal Government in September, 1911. In that period he guided through Parliament two Immigration Bills (1906, 1910), and his department was responsible for various orders in council affecting immigrants. Astoundingly, insignificant is the only word to describe what has been written concerning Oliver's impact on immigration. Occasionally he receives a paragraph or two in an overview of the immigration policy of the period usually focusing on Clifford Sifton. As such, his role and impact have been diminished, underestimated, and confused.[1] Oliver's bullish nature and his outspoken views, which were virtually the antitheses of Sifton's, suggests that there must have been some change in policy from 1904 to 1906, and certainly by 1911. In that period, Sir Wilfrid Laurier also had an impact on immigration policy greater than is customarily assumed.

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[1] See Karel Bicha, "Canadian Immigration Policy and the American Farmer, 1896-1914" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1963), p. 176 or, Mabel F. Timlin, "Canada's Immigration Policy, 1896-1910," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science 4 (November, 1960) for examples. The fact of Oliver's anonymity speaks for itself.

This impact was especially evident when policy touched on the railways and the immigrants necessary to build them. Together, the period and policy are relatively uncharted territory. Investigation demonstrates that, for the most part, Oliver was given a free hand to construct the framework necessary to implement many of the views he propounded while a private Member of Parliament. However, the full implementation of that framework was to be delayed a few years.

Wilfrid Laurier informed the House of Commons of Clifford Sifton's resignation on March 1, 1905.[2] Sifton had taken the step after he had lost a constitutional battle with Laurier. Reflecting the opinions of a large portion of English Ontario and Western Canada, Sifton rejected Laurier's vision of the school system to be established in the soon to be created provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. The search was on for someone to fill the vacant portfolio of Minister of the Interior. A number of individuals were rumored to be in the running for the honour, including Oliver; Walter Scott, Member of Parliament from Regina (Saskatchewan); and the Hon. William Templeman, Minister without Portfolio from British

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[2] Joseph Schull, Laurier: The First Canadian (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd., 1965), p. 450.

Columbia.[3]

Oliver was by no means assured of the post, and in some quarters was even considered a longshot. Peter Talbot, Liberal Member of Parliament from Strathcona (Alberta), believed that because of some of Oliver's former stands, he was considered unacceptable in the higher circles of the party's elite. Talbot believed Scott would be the choice.[4] Indeed, Oliver never even revealed his desire to be Minister until after Sifton's resignation, and only then because his name was suggested as the first Premier of Alberta.[5] As the most powerful Liberal in Alberta, why he would turn down the virtually assured position of the Premiership for a chance to become the Minister of the Interior remains unanswered. Perhaps he felt he could better direct Alberta's affairs from a federal level. It is also possible that Laurier had privately guaranteed him the portfolio. Most likely, Oliver simply gambled that he would be offered it.

A factor that must have played significantly in Oliver's reasoning was Laurier's need to choose as Minister someone from Western Canada who would be assured

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[3] C.A.R., 1905, p. 27; Letter from A.B. Lowe to Laurier, 10-4-05. Wilfrid Laurier Papers, Public Archives of Canada (1973), p. 96,443.

[4] L.G. Thomas, The Liberal Party in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), p. 16.

[5] Ibid., p. 16.

of a large by-election victory. In this period it was necessary that a Member appointed to a cabinet porfolio go back to the people for a show of their support. It was generally considered that Western Canadian support for Laurier's education clauses in the new provincial constitutions was dubious, and the Prime Minister longed for an overwhelming victory to which he could point as positive proof of Western support.[6] Oliver had been elected in the 1904 election by a majority of 2,029 votes in an election where only 5,081 votes had been cast, and there was no reason to believe that the community he had done so much for would elect him by anything less in the next election.[7] In the end it may have been for this very political and pragmatic reason that Laurier chose Oliver as his new Minister of the Interior. This conclusion is all the more justified when one notes that Oliver was also against the idea of separate schools, though not to the vehement extreme of some.[8] The choice had little to do with Oliver's stands in Parliament, or as has been suggested, the declining influence of Clifford Sifton.[9]

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[6] C.A.R., 1905, p. 28.

[7] Ibid., p. 28.

[8] Howard Palmer, "Responses to Foreign Immigration: Nativism and Ethnic Tolerance in Alberta, 1880-1920" (M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1971), p. 39.

[9] D.J. Hall, Clifford Sifton: A Lonely Eminence, 1901-1929 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985), p. 191.

Laurier justified his decision in a letter to Alberta's Lieutenant Governor Bulyea, in which he stated "we have selected Frank Oliver and if he is elected by a fair majority, as we expect, this ought to go far to quell the Ontario agitation."[10]

Oliver's choice as Minister caused a rift in the ranks of the Conservatives. The debate centred around whether or not to run an opposing candidate in the Edmonton by-election. The prevailing opinion in Alberta, as judged by prominent Liberals, was that Oliver would "...be elected hands down," and that the Conservatives would be lucky to find a candidate, and even luckier "...to save his deposit." Indeed, it was believed that an election would have probably resulted in an increased majority for Oliver. Though some prominent Conservatives urged opposition, including Robert Borden, the leader of the federal party, the local Conservatives' decision to let Oliver run unopposed reflected the overwhelming popularity of the newly appointed Minister.[11] Needless to say, Laurier was quite pleased with the acclamation.[12] His successful maneuverings, and the resultant absence of

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[10] Laurier to Bulyea, dated 10-4-05. Wilfrid Laurier Papers, p. 96,443.

[11] Ibid., p. 96,421. A.B Lowe to Laurier, 10-4-05; p. 96,475. Letter from Charles W. Cross to Wilfrid Laurier, 11-4-05.

[12] Ibid., Dated 26-4-05. p. 96,865.

opposition, helped to facilitate the passing of the question of provincial education rights off the Dominion stage.[13]

On April 8, 1905, Frank Oliver was sworn in as Minister of the Interior. Canadian reaction to his selection was mixed. His ability was generally believed to be less than Sifton's, and Oliver, hitherto an independent Liberal, was censured by the Conservatives for finally giving in to the discipline and pressures of party politics.[14] The notion that the only reason for Oliver's being chosen was his electability was the theme critics most often harped on. The Conservative Montreal Gazette astutely observed that Laurier was forced into choosing Oliver "...by the awkwardness of the situation." Laurier needed his policy endorsed, and thus, "Edmonton rather than Oliver won the promotion." The Gazette believed that Oliver had some force, but that he was neither cabinet material, nor the equal of Sifton in anything.[15]

The Conservative Halifax Herald echoed the same line, stating that "he was the one man in the Northwest whom the

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[13] John W. Dafoe, Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd., 1931), p. 300.

[14] C.A.R., 1905, p. 28. It is interesting to note that L.G. Thomas claims that as late as 22-3-05 Oliver was not convinced of the value of introducing party lines into his political philosophy. Thomas, The Liberal Party in Alberta, p. 16.

[15] Montreal Gazette, 10-4-05.

Government felt pretty certain of being able to elect." Edmonton desired to become the capital and the Herald painted the whole event as little more than a bribe. It saw Mr. Scott, of Calgary -- a mistake perhaps indicative of Eastern Canada's understanding of the situation in Western Canada -- as a much better candidate. The Herald added that the electorate of the Edmonton constituency was not representative of the Northwest as a whole, and, being foreign, was "...unfit to give an intelligent verdict on the [educational] issues involved...but [was] believed by the Government to be quite ready to vote just as the Government tells them."[16] The Conservative Calgary Herald built on this latter point. It pointed out that the 1900 census showed the Russian population to be the largest single block in the constituency, with Roman Catholicism as the single most predominant religion. Combined, the English, Irish and Scots were only 25% of the electorate, and it estimated that since 1900 the influx of non-British was probably five times greater than British. The Herald felt that this was certainly not representative of the population of the Northwest as a whole. Whether the management was pleased with the choice of an Albertan for such an important portfolio or whether it believed that it had become futile at that point to criticize, their criticism was minimal.

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[16] Halifax Herald, 13-4-05.

Support or criticism of the choice of Oliver did not fall strictly along party lines. The Conservative Vancouver Daily Province, though expressing its disappointment that British Columbia's claims for the portfolio, in the form of William Templeman, were again overlooked, congratulated the Government on its excellent choice. Given his experience in public affairs, and the respect he had earned from his colleagues and constituency, it expected "that the department will be conducted with energy and to the satisfaction of the public...." The Daily Province added that "his knowledge of the affairs of the Northwest is more extensive, perhaps, than that of any man in the House of Commons. He has in fact "grown up" with the West and represents its ideals to a remakable degree."[17] This was the theme of many who supported Laurier's choice. The Liberal Toronto Globe stated that "few men living know more about western Canada than Mr. Frank Oliver....He is a pioneer of the pioneers." In one editorial, after giving a brief history of his experiences in the West, the Globe concluded,

> He is the material of which Ministers of the Interior should be made. He is familiar with the problems that confront the builders of the west. He has shown his faith in it as the home of men and his faith has been triumphantly justified. Mr. Oliver has industry and firmness and a clear and logical understanding, and it may be

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[17] Vancouver Daily Province, 8-4-05.

prophesied that he will fill the office with general approval.[18]

If one could expect any Liberal criticism, Sifton's Manitoba Free Press would be the most obvious source. Instead, it gave its approval and let its satisfaction over Laurier's choice be known. It warmly acknowledged Oliver's long experience and contact with western life, and his energetic and outspoken Parliamentary career on behalf of his constituents. It fully expected him to carry on the high standards set by his predecessor. As a testimony to Oliver's ability, when Laurier consulted Sifton on the best choice for his successor, Sifton, despite his personal animosity toward Oliver, "strongly recommended Mr. Oliver...on the grounds of long service and capacity."[19]

By 1905 Canada was witnessing dramatic increases in immigration. The energetic policies of Clifford Sifton had fulfilled his promises, and the number of immigrants had swelled over four and a half times in a mere seven years, from 31,702 in 1898 to 146,266 in 1904-05.[20] There had also been some changes in the nature of those immigrating. In the year ending December 31, 1898 45.1% of the

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[18] Toronto Globe, 10-4-05.

[19] Dafoe, Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times, p. 301.

[20] These, and the following statistics are found in Canada, Parliament, Sessional Papers, 1899, no. 25, p. 107; Immigration Facts and Figures, 1917, p. 8.

immigrants were British and French, while 28.8% were from the United States. Only 17.8% were from outside Britain, America or Northern Europe. Some 41.8% of the immigrants were male. Of these, 28.3% stated their intentions to work on the land. Mechanics, or skilled labour composed 8.2%, while general labourers made up 38.0%. During the year 4,848 homestead entries were reported.[21]

Similar statistics for the year ending June 30, 1905, show little change in overall proportions. British and French made up 46.4% of the immigrants, while 29.8% were from the United States. While only 19.6% were from outside Britain, the United States, or northern Europe, from negligible numbers in 1898, there were very large increases in the numbers of certain groups, including over 10,000 Austro-Hungarians, and just under 8,000 Italians. The percentage of male immigrants increased slightly to 43.6, and of these, 38.9% desired to work on the land, 17.8% were skilled labourers, and 16.3% were general labourers. There were 30,819 homestead entries reported. While the Canadian situation as a whole had not been dramatically altered, it had for certain places within the country. As has been pointed out, Edmonton district and Alberta were two such cases. There were also noticeable increases in certain minorities. When Oliver became

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[21] Sessional Papers, 1905, no. 25, p. xx. For a more comprehensive picture of Canadian immigration, see Appendix, Tables 1 and 3.

Minister of the Interior, then, the general trend for immigration was firmly set. Approximately 75% of the immigrants were, by Oliver's standards, desirable. However, it was the other 25%, and more importantly, the fact that a large portion of these were going into Western Canada, that alarmed Oliver and a significant number of Canadians. Could the smaller Canadian population of the region successfully assimilate large numbers of foreigners? Many were convinced that it could not. To combat this problem Oliver set about to implement the ideas he had so often voiced.

In 1905 the legal basis of Canadian immigration policy was scattered in a wide variety of laws and orders in council. The out-dated Immigration Act (Statutes, Cap. 10, 32-33 Victoria, 1869) had been passed thirty-five years previously, and subsequently modified by amendments and orders in council over the years. Oliver's first tasks as Minister were the consolidation and recasting of this hodge-podge, so as to effectively suit the rapidly changing needs of Canada as he saw them. Thanks to the efforts of the Interior Department in the first years of the Liberal administration, the task of filling of the Northwest was successfully well underway. Fro. 1901 to 1905 there was an increase of the population of the

Northwest from 158,958 to 443,175.[22] And with 74,676 immigrants destined for the Prairie provinces in 1905, the continued flow of immigration seemed assured.[23] The need of quantity had been taken care of. Oliver believed it was time to ensure that greater emphasis be placed on the quality of the immigrant. The task at hand was to make immigration policy reflect this need.

In one of his first major speeches in the House of Commons as Minister of the Interior Oliver outlined these new requirements of Canada, and foreshadowed the imminent changes in immigration policy.

> In regard to the character of immigration and a possible change of direction of immigration effort, I think it is reasonable to say that as conditions change the direction of the effort may very well be changed as well. In the days when the Northwest Territories of Canada did not attract even the attention of Canadians for settlement, it may have been necessary to look further afield for settlers than is necessary today, when the Northwest is attracting the attention of people all over the world, the best people in the world, and it is admitted universally that we have the best things to offer, the best field in the world. Under these circumstances, it is quite proper to consider the desirability of adapting our future efforts to the changed conditions; and while the same energy may be necessary

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22 Fourth Census of Canada, 1901; Census of Population and Agriculture of the Northwest Provinces 1906, Sessional Paper, no. 17a, 1907. The latter figure is only for Saskatchewan and Alberta.

23 Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 4.

> in attempting to secure the best class of immigrants, the effort may very well take a different direction from what it did when the country was not so well known.[24]

The groundwork of numbers that Oliver believed Sifton desired to lay when Minister of the Interior had been laid.[25] However, the Department, with Oliver as skipper, was increasingly in a position to alter its strategy, and instead of concentrating on what had become quite broadly aimed publicity, efforts were to be re-directed to centre on selection by means of more carefully and narrowly focussed publicity.

Oliver gave a more detailed outline of what was to be his immigration policy soon after his appointment:

> ...my view is, as it has always been, that the country requires a vigorous immigration policy, and that the policy should be acted upon with due regard to the ultimate effect upon our country of the people whom we induce to settle in it....[26]

Pragmatically, he recognized the urgent need for as many settlers as could be induced to immigrate. He also realized the necessity of procuring as desirable a class as possible. He promised that "...the effort of the department will be to attain both objects so far as

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[24] House of Commons Debates, col. 9315, 12-7-05.

[25] Ibid., col. 7690, 19-6-05.

[26] Ibid., col. 7690, 19-6-05.

possible." [27] In certain areas policy had been very successful, and needed no alteration. However, he continued, "...it has never been a part of the settled policy of the Government to induce indiscriminate immigration, and it will not be the policy of the Government to induce indiscriminate immigration or to deal with immigration indiscriminately." Canada would continue her aggressive campaign.[28]

Pressured in debate to defend Government immigration expenditures, Oliver claimed that his policy would be implemented with the greatest economy and efficiency. While the Opposition, led by Thomas Sproule, the Member of Parliament for East Grey (Ontario), attacked the skyrocketing costs of immigration work, Oliver defended the necessity of the expenditure of funds.[29] He felt it was ridiculous for the country to consider any suggestions which would slow the encouragement of immigration. Canada was not yet so well known as to be able to curtail her publicity expenditures and efforts, and solely rely on word of mouth as her only advertisement for continued

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[27] Ibid., col. 7691, 19-6-05.

[28] Ibid., col. 7690, 19-6-05; Edmonton Bulletin, 7-5-06.

[29] Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 22. In 1901-02 $494,482 was spent. By 1904-05 it nearly doubled to $972,357. Canadian immigration expenditures for Great Britain and the United States increased during Oliver's administration. See Appendix, Table 4.

immigration. Oliver never wanted to curtail the promotion of Canada; he simply desired to focus that promotion where it would best serve the country. Oliver's strategy was clear. While Canada would continue to send out invitations, it would take much greater care in respect to whom it asked to become a Canadian.

Although Oliver desired that a bill respecting immigration be introduced in 1905, its drafting was not completed in time, and he was forced to delay until the following year. Bill 170, "To Amend the Immigration Act" was introduced on May 21, 1906. In April, in the Bulletin, unfettered by the restraints of Parliament, Oliver had given advance notice of his intention to introduce a comprehensive Immigration Act, and of his reasons why. Editorial comment stressed the concept of the immigrant as a future citizen, and the necessity of assuring that all immigrants be able to discharge the full obligations of citizenship. With this in mind, and noting that Canada had "...[never] hesitated to decline admission to those who appeared likely to menace society," Oliver assured his readers that the measures to be taken were "...extensions of a practice rather than the inception of a policy."[30] However, the Bulletin emphasised that Canada must learn from the United States, which it portrayed as a Mecca for the dissatisfied of Europe. Clearly, the

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[30] Edmonton Bulletin, 11-4-06.

American experience demonstrated there was "a limit beyond which it is not safe to pursue the policy of the 'open door.'" It was imperative that Canada "...give some attention to the general character of those who desire to secure the powers and privileges of citizenship, and to thus leave their impression on the future of a country yet in the plastic stage of development."[31]

Commenting on both Canada's future and the immigrant's influence upon it, the Bulletin added,

> The ideal of Canadians should be a country rich both in material possessions and in a civilization unsurpassed in either the past or the present....But the rapidity with which this ideal will be accomplished depends in a very great degree on the character of those who shall lay the foundations of material prosperity and shall give tone to the national civilization in the earlier stages of our national life.[32]

It is very significant that the Bulletin argued that the only way to secure that ideal was to give

> ...heed to the characteristics of those who seek to become citizens, by endeavoring to secure the preponderance of immigrants from those races which have given the most pronounced and consistent evidence of these desirable qualities, and, if necessary, by refusing to admit those who do not measure up to this standard.[33]

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[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid., 11-4-06.

[33] Ibid., 11-4-06.

The standard of which the Bulletin spoke was measured on a cultural scale, based on what was evident from the successes and failures of various peoples. This was a significant departure from the earlier policy of Sifton, who employed a much more economic scale. The editorial concluded that the problems of securing the future of Canada were no longer to be solved by answering the question "Who can be secured?" but rather "Who can best be secured?"[34] Oliver would argue that Sifton had answered the former question. It had long been Oliver's desire to answer the latter, and he declared that it would be the focus of future immigration policy. His distinctive stamp was being placed on the Department and practice.

When Oliver introduced his Bill to Parliament, he accompanied it with a blunt statement of its purpose: "...to give the department in control of immigration greater authority to deal with immigrants who, for one reason or another, may be properly subjected to restriction on their landing in Canada or deportation."[35] He felt such a move was necessary because the existing law was old, having been passed when immigration was a responsibility of the Department of Agriculture, outdated, and "...not adapted to existing conditions and existing requirements." A further explanation came on June 13, when

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[34] Ibid., 11-4-06.

[35] House of Common Debates, col. 3712, 21-5-06.

the Bill was read for the second time and sent to committee. Oliver pointed out that it was not a codification of existing laws, but a "...continuation of the existing law, with certain small amendments and with certain additions also, which are intended to make it suit modern requirements."[36] Oliver placed great stress on the changing nature of conditions in Canada, and how the Bill was meant to respond to such changes.

Oliver informed the House that the Bill represented his ideas, ideas which involved the general control of immigration, and in particular the control of undesirable immigration. Its purpose was not to promote immigration, but solely to regulate it. "This is, as it were, a brake upon the wheel, and is in a different position from the other branch of the immigration effort, which is to bring in immigrants."[37] In effect, it was the implementation of his concerns that quality, in the form of greater selection and restriction, replace quantity as the focus of immigration policy. Respecting the supremacy of Parliament, and quite sure, perhaps overconfidently, of the need of what he had set out, Oliver was willing to let the House amend or do away with whatever it felt to be overly drastic measures. It was his opinion, however, that the Bill need be drastic. Expecting criticism on the

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[36] Ibid., col. 5159, 13-6-06.

[37] Ibid., col. 5205, 13-6-06.

broadness of some of the clauses, and the power extended to the Minister therefrom, he added that it was essential, for the Bill's effectivness, that the final say on matters of selection and rejection rest with the Minister. This would enable him to exercise "...instant effective action in preventing the introduction of undesirables."[38] Oliver concluded his introduction of the Bill by imploring members to leave intact the Bill insofar as those clauses regarding restriction were involved. He suggested that anything not directly related to this need could be struck down and dealt with later.[39] It is obvious that Oliver believed he was responding to a virtual national crisis. The limited debate over the Bill suggests that the country agreed, and that Oliver did indeed have his finger on the pulse of the nation.

Oliver's Bill became the Immigration Act of 1906 (officially, "An Act respecting Immigration and Immigrants"). The significant changes provided in the Act can be grouped into four or five categories: the greater protection of immigrants; in some cases stiffer, and in others weaker, penalties for breaking the law; the greater restriction of immigrants; and the greater power given to the Minister of the Department. The greater protection offered immigrants is interesting, in that it appears

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[38] Ibid., cols., 5198, 5201, 5215, 13-6-06.

[39] Ibid., col. 5409, 15-6-06.

contradictory to a policy geared to restrict immigration. However, immigrants were, among other things, to be guaranteed a more comfortable voyage to Canada, assured that job opportunities advertised in Canada actually existed, and promised that they would be justly compensated for any wrongs done them.[40] There was obviously a need, unquestioned in the ensuing debates, to protect the immigrant from unscrupulous individuals who were quite willing to take advantage of their situation. Rather, the debate which did occur in the House focused on a small number of issues. As Oliver predicted, the broadness of the powers granted to the Minister sparked concern. There was also often heated discussion on the definition of an immigrant, the duty to be placed on an immigrant, the deportation of immigrants, and their effect on labour, and the blanket prohibitionary clause. Other debate was minimal.

To Canadians of the period, the word "immigrant" connoted not only a place of origin, but a social class. There were no concerns among members of Parliament as to the relative positions of first-class and steerage passengers to Canada. A first-class passenger was clearly not an immigrant, while one travelling in steerage (third-class) was. The difference occurred over whether or not a

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[40] Immigrants were guaranteed more space on the vessel than in the previous Act. Canada, Statutes, 1906, Chapter 93, Sections 11, 45, 70.

second-class passenger was to be considered an immigrant.[41] This was important because if a passenger was not an immigrant then he would not fall under the dictates of the Act. The concern voiced by Conservatives was that, in such a case, an undesirable immigrant could easily slip by immigration officials. There was also some anxiety that naturalized and native Canadians and British subjects were not explicitly exempt from the reach of this law, and could thus be considered immigrants. The solution offered by Oliver was that the Act would state that Canadians and British would not be immigrants, and that all classes of passengers, except Canadians, were to be inspected. Any found undesirable in this process -- including British passengers -- would then be considered immigrants under the Act. Both these amendments were found acceptable.[42] They were also probably much to the liking of Oliver himself. The Senate further amended the definition to bring under the operation of the Act those who arrived by train, as well as those by boat.[43] This no doubt reflected the concern over the increased immigration from the United States. The Senate's amendment was accepted by the House of Commons.

One of the most controversial issues was the clause

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41 House of Common Debates, col. 5198, 13-6-06.

42 Ibid., col. 5407, 15-6-06; col. 5563, 19-6-06.

43 Ibid., col. 7116, 5-7-06.

which put in place a duty on immigrants, and ultimately Oliver was forced to retreat by withdrawing it. Despite the fact that the clause as presented was basically section 2 of the 1869 Act, it stirred swarms of opposition in debate. Although the duty was to be no more than $2 per immigrant, as it had been previously, various Conservatives voiced numerous anxieties. Some simply opposed the idea of a head tax. Others feared the possibility that British subjects might be so taxed. Others felt that such a duty might inhibit immigration. The most vigorous criticism was that any policy which both offered a bonus for immigration and charged for admission was both foolish and contradictory.[44] The Conservatives were split on the issue. The majority of the Opposition was for any alterations in policy which would lead to greater selection and restriction. A duty would possibly do just that, and it was supported by some of the Conservatives on that basis. However, it was also argued by a number of the Opposition that a $2 charge was insufficient to stop anyone from immigrating. Uriah Wilson, Member of Parliament from Lennox and Addington (Ontario) maintained that a minimum of $5, in accordance with American policy, would be much more effective.[45]

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[44] Ibid., cols. 5218, 5231, 13-6-06; col. 5408, 15-6-06.

[45] Ibid., cols. 5408, 5409, 15-6-06.

Through the press it became obvious that public opinion was against any such duty. The Conservative Vancouver Daily Herald called such a move absurd in light of the bonus the Government was paying out, and expressed its doubt that a $2 charge would keep out any undesirables. It added, "...it is ridiculous, now that the right kind of immigrants [British, French, and German] are headed for the country, that they should be subjected to a toll which will discourage them without benefitting our resources to any material extent."[46] The equally Conservative Montreal Gazette echoed these sentiments, demanding that no barriers should be placed in the way of intending immigrants. It deplored the restriction of any immigrants, if they were willing to work, and were free of disease.[47] Even the Liberal Toronto Globe could find little justification for a clause empowering Government to place a duty on immigrants. It reasoned that it "...would certainly be out of harmony with Canadian ideals of the treatment to be given to foreigners," and expressed what it saw to be the absurdity of paying an immigrant to come on the one hand and of taking money from him upon his arrival with the other.[48]

Oliver viewed the whole idea of bonuses in a

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[46] Vancouver Daily Province, 21-6-06.

[47] Montreal Gazette, 15-6-06.

[48] Toronto Globe, 16-6-06.

different light, but that will be discussed later. In any case, he could not understand the criticism of this clause, and believed the Conservatives to be quite hypocritical in denouncing it. The Bulletin expressed Oliver's skepticism as to their motives, describing how easily the Conservatives attacked the proposed Canadian duty clause, while yet pointing to the American system, which incorporated a duty, as the proper model for the Canadian policy. The Bulletin defended the clause as necessary on occasion to prevent or discourage immigrants who might pass all the other requirements of the Act from entering Canada.[49] Given the fact that Section 30 adequately took care of this problem, Oliver hardly needed to express worry about the debate.[50] He was probably simply venting his exasperation at what he no doubt considered to be the stubbornness of the Opposition, unable to see matters in his light, and their argument constructed of cards.

In Parliament Oliver made it clear that it was not his desire to implement a head tax, but only to have the option of doing so. He argued that this was not a

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[49] Edmonton Bulletin, 18-6-06.

[50] Section 30 permitted the Governor in Council to "...prohibit the landing in Canada of any specified class of immigrants..." after due notice had been given to the transportation companies. It is discussed later in this chapter. Statutes of Canada, 6 Edward VII, 1906, Chapter 19, p. 7.

retrogressive measure, that as efforts were increased to bring in more desirable immigrants, more undesirable immigrants would naturally be carried along in the flow. It was to be "...a weapon of defence" used to limit undesirables in case of an emergency, such as if Parliament could not be recalled, or if a number of the undesirable immigrants rejected by the United States increasingly continued to be diverted to Canada.[51] Swift action was often the only solution, and it was essential that the Government be able to take that preventative measure. Eventually, due to oppostion both in and out of Parliament, and to his desire to "...facilitate the passage of the Bill," Oliver drew in his horns, and with scarcely hidden contempt for the House, moved to strike the clause.[52]

There was also limited debate concerning the Act's impact on labour. The resultant resolutions reflect Oliver's sympathy with the workers of Canada. In the Bill as presented, section 12 stated that if an emigrant received any money to defray emigration expenses, he would be required to repay it in Canada. Ralph Smith, the Liberal-Labour Member from Nanaimo (British Columbia), suggested that one interpretation of the clause would permit immigrants to be brought into Canada, and, having

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[51] Ibid., col. 5231, 13-6-06.

[52] Ibid., cols., 5408, 5409, 13-6-06.

to repay their employers by law, they could be forced with or without their knowledge to work as strikebreakers. Smith recommended that it be removed. Oliver stated that it was merely a section from the old Act, and that he would place the suggestion under consideration.[53] The section was later dropped.[54] Section 35 empowered the Minister to deport an immigrant on the basis of crime, sickness or injury. Once again, Smith jumped to the defense of Labour, and objected to the portion of the section which stated "...or becomes incapacitated through sickness or accident to earn a livelihood." He saw this as a tremendous hardship, and argued that it would force bona fide immigrants to leave Canada, as the possible result of an accident or sickness through no fault of their own. Oliver agreed, and, noting his oversight that the objectionable phrase should never have been placed in the amended clause, had it struck out.[55] These actions by Oliver also further demonstrate his concern for the immigrant's welfare.

Some members were not overly pleased that the Bill proposed to concentrate more power in the hands of the Minister. Various sections involving the appointment of agents, and their location (3,4,5) were cited, though the

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[53] Ibid., col. 5241, 13-6-06.

[54] Ibid., col. 5409, 15-6-06.

[55] Ibid., col. 5255, 13-6-06.

general broadening of Ministerial power permeated the Bill. George Foster, Conservative Member of Parliament from North Toronto, raged that "...you [Oliver] give the Minister a personal power which is as wide as the world," and wondered aloud at what had become of the principle of Parliamentary responsibility.[56] Oliver at first conciliatorily offered to change "Minister" in the offending clauses to "Governor in Council", and though this was certainly not a significant restraint upon the Minister's power, it was enough to appease, and was ultimately adopted. However, Oliver also defended the use of "Minister" by noting that the purpose of the Act was to put within the power and under the responsibility of the Government, as far as possible, the prevention of undesirable immigrants from entering Canada. It was therefore important that power be vested in the Minister to establish his authority, so that he could at any time, and instantly if required, take effective action as he deemed necessary.[57] Oliver later stated that the Act must perforce be broad enough to enable the Government to deal with unforseen circumstances as they arose. He respected Parliament; it was not his desire to give anyone undue power; and it was his opinion that the principle of Ministerial responsibility would be a sufficient safeguard

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[56] Ibid., col. 5204, 13-6-06.

[57] Ibid., col. 5205, 13-6-06.

against abuse.[58] Oliver had firm and definite convictions on duty and obligation. He knew where the buck must stop.

The most striking clause in the 1906 Immigration Act, but one that raised significantly minor debate, is section 30 (section 32 in the original Bill). It is important enough to be given in full.

> 30. The Governor in Council may, by proclamation or order, whenever he considers it necessary or expedient, prohibit the landing in Canada of any specified class of immigrants, of which due notice shall be given to the transportation companies.
> 2. The Governor in Council may make such regulations as are necessary to prohibit the entry into Canada of any greater number of persons from any foreign country than the laws of such country permit to emigrate to Canada.[59]

It was an admittedly drastic new clause by Oliver. His justification for the measure was that there had been "...an immigration of gypsies lately and it is thought that such people are not desirable under any circumstances although they are physically and mentally fit, and that it would be quite proper to take power to say: You can not come in."[60] Here was another example which demonstrates that Canadians believed there was obviously more to be considered when rating potential citizens than their

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[58] Ibid., col. 5215, 13-6-06.

[59] Statutes of Canada, 6 Edward VII, 1906, Chapter 93, p. 7.

[60] House of Commons Debates, col. 5252, 13-6-06.

physical and mental state. Oliver's reasoning demonstrates the difficulty of putting those cultural concerns and requirements into words and legislation. Haugnton Lennox, Member of Parliament from South Simcoe (Ontario), argued that the section put too much power in the hands of the Government, allowing it to dictate the number of classes to be excluded. Given the fact that the exact opposite argument -- that the Government did not have enough power -- had been earlier used by the Conservatives to criticise the Bill, this suggests that the Opposition were grasping at straws in a feeble attempt to debate this Bill, which they on the whole so desperately desired.

Thomas Sproule, the Conservative Member of Parliament from East Grey (Ontario), did attempt to start a debate on the definition of a gypsy, but that went nowhere. Most Members of Parliament agreed with Oliver that their wandering and supposedly morally loose life-style made them among the least desirable European immigrants.[61] This raises the question as to whether or not Oliver deliberately chose to get this potentially explosive clause through the House on the backs of the gypsies. He was certainly pragmatic and shrewd enough to achieve its passage in this way. However, given that the various powers were to be used to enable the Minister to respond

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61 Palmer, "Responses to Foreign Immigration: Nativism and Ethnic tolerance in Alberta, 1880-1920," p. 128.

immediately and effectively as the situation required it, it is reasonable to assume that Oliver expected unforseen problems for which it would be impossible to wait for the recall of Parliament. He assumed there would be further need for the clause. Whether or not he had particular groups in mind against which he wished to act remains unanswerable. Though the future presented numerous opportunities to use this section, Oliver never employed it.[62]

The Act was speedily passed by the House of Commons on June 19, 1906, less than a month after its introduction. This in itself is significant. Given that such a major Bill had received such minimal debate, a just conclusion is that the majority of the members of the House wanted just such an Act, and probably most Canadians equally desired it. As was pointed out in the previous chapter, the mood of the nation was for greater restriction and more careful selection. The press of the country reflected this attitude. Although criticisms were made of certain clauses, often very reminiscent of

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[62] The fact that Oliver never actually used the section to prohibit any one group of immigrants leads to the question of whether or not it was included in the Act simply to appease public opinion. Although Oliver was a populist in many ways, this conclusion is not likely. From his other comments in Parliament, it is obvious that he would have used the section's restrictive powers if left with no other alternative. He could also point to section 30 as proof of the spirit of the 1906 Immigration Act: restriction and selection.

objections raised in Parliament, the ideas of tightening and putting into place selective measures went unscathed. The clause which received the greatest wrath -- the $2 duty -- was eventually dropped.

Reflecting the regional nature of the immigration debate, the Conservative Calgary Herald called for greater restrictions, and suggested the need for greater scrutiny of the immigrant as he arrived in Canada. It very much reflected the views of Frank Oliver when it added that although all immigrants were of value to the transportation companies, "...the question that the people who are already here should consider is whether a large per centage [sic] of these people are of any benefit to Canada."[63] That was one for the bleeding hearts -- of which Oliver certainly was not one -- to chew on.

That Oliver attempted to pass amendments to the Immigration Act in 1908, 1909, and 1910, when it was finally ratified by the House, would lead one to assume that he was not overly pleased with the results of the 1906 Act. From 1906 to 1908 immigration continued its significant rise, from 189,064 in 1906 to 262,469 in 1908, for an increase of 38%.[64] Those rejected at the ocean ports (inspections at the United States border were not

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[63] Calgary Herald, 31-5-06.

[64] These and the following figures are from Immigration Facts and Figures.

implemented until April, 1908) increased from 524 to 1,172, the majority in both years a result of medical causes, though there was a significant increase in the number rejected as likely to become public charges. The number of deportations of those already admitted into Canada rose from 137 to 825. The effort to be more selective was exerted. The seemingly most baffling statistics were those of immigration by nationality. The number of British immigrants jumped from 1906-08, not surprisingly, from 86,796 to 120,182, while American immigrants remained virtually the same, increasing less than a thousand, from 57,796 to 58,312. Surprisingly, those from Southeastern Europe (including Austro-Hungary), nearly doubled, going from 23,309 to 44,612, while the increase for Asiatic immigrants was even more spectacular, rising from 2,327 to 12,108.

A more enlightening picture results from the conjunction of these last numbers with the statistics describing the immigrants and their occupations. In 1906 the total number of males was 88,047, while they had increased to 153,828 in 1908. As a percentage of the totals for each year, the number of males immigrating to Canada jumped dramatically from 46.6% to 58.6%. In 1906, 42.7% of the total number of immigrants declared their intention to be agriculturalists, 19.8% were skilled labour, and 17.3% were general labourers. These numbers

had changed startlingly by 1908, when 32.4% (-10.3%) were declared to be agriculturalists, 22.3% (+2.5%) were skilled labour, and 25.7% (+8.4%) were general labourers.

The Immigration Act was designed to be more selective, and Oliver's inclination was certainly in that direction. The question arises, then, as to why there was an increase in the number of people Oliver considered both culturally and economically undesirable? He had little complaint with an increase of labourers, if they were mainly British or American, as long as significant numbers of them went to Western Canada, and did not end up in cities.[65] It is apparent that such a significant increase in the number of Asiatics and Southeastern Europeans must have made a considerable contribution to the immigration of labourers. Why this increase? Why the sudden need for labourers? It is at this stage where Laurier had his most significant impact on immigration policy. Construction of the National Trancontinental railway began in 1907, and as a crucial plank in the Liberals' platform, it had to be built, and as quickly as possible. Laurier was driven obsessively on the single track of railway policy, in

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[65] During Sifton's administration (1897-1904) the overall average of homesteads filed as a percent of total immigration was 17.7. For the Oliver years it was 19.0%. These figures do not mean that 17.7%/19.0% of immigrants filed for homesteads. Instead they demonstrate that under Oliver more were settling on the land. Clearly Oliver was attracting more agriculturalists than Sifton had been able to. See Appendix, Table 3.

which virtually all other policy matters were spurs to nowhere. The consequence of this was the rendering of the Immigration Act of 1906 ineffective.

Chapter IV

The Building of the Fence

Immigration Policy Before the Immigration Act of 1910

Frank Oliver's immigration policy was affected in the first few years of his ministry by two factors beyond his control. One was Laurier's railway policy. The other was the economy. The year 1906-07 was to emerge as the most prosperous in a decade, beginning in 1896-97, of generally steady growth under the Liberals. Year after year the amount of land under acerage grew, and production increased. Cities rapidly expanded, and new railway track was laid daily, multiplying the demand for wood products and lumber workers. There were mining booms in British Columbia, and Alberta, and, as entrepreneurs began to see the possibilities beneath the barren surface of the Canadian shield, in northern Ontario.[1] Canada increasingly moved into the production of raw, semi-manufactured materials, and began to develop and strengthen highly specialized industries.[2] Prospects had dawned more brilliantly with each year.

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[1] Mary Innis, An Economic History of Canada (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1935), pps. 251, 253, 261, 275.

[2] John B. Brebner, North Atlantic Triangle, Carleton Library Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945; reprint ed., Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1966), p. 241.

"The most conspicuous feature of Canadian history in 1906 was the growth of the country, in wealth and world interest, and in the personal prosperity of its people," boasted the C.A.R.. It added that "prosperity and progress were everywhere."[3] The economy made phenomenal advances. The Department of Labour's 1906-07 annual report stated "...employment has been plentiful, and the demand for labour strong and continuous," a demand that, on the whole, had greatly exceeded supply.[4] To be more blunt, the economy voraciously devoured all the workers it could get. Reports from across the country growled with the rumblings of this appetite. Montreal was in such need for workers that employers were "crimping" sailors off ships.[5] The wheat production of 1906-07 was unsurpassed, and in Winnipeg, farmers, unable to compete with the mining and railway interests, were crying for farm labour.[6] The Edmonton Bulletin gave notice of the Western labour shortage in fields of industry beyond those of wheat, and stated that in spite of high immigration more settlers were still required. Ironically, the more labourers who

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[3] C.A.R., 1906, pps. 17, 18.

[4] Sessional Papers, 1907-08, no. 36, Department of Labour, p. 7.

[5] Montreal Gazette, 16-6-06.

[6] Edmonton Bulletin, from Manitoba Free Press 14-8-07.

appeared, the more who seemed to be needed.[7] Despite his desire for selective immigration, Oliver realized that Canada's cultural needs had to be sacrificed to economic pressures, and for political expediency. He was forced to open the doors, and let the workers, for the most part unskilled, to feed this boom enter unimpeded.

An integral part of this economic expansion, possessing one of the more acute appetites for labour, was railway construction. It had an impact on the Canadian economy and society far beyond the laying of tracks. The railway industry was "...the outstanding spokesman for an open door immigration policy."[8] It depleted the pool of farm labour, and more importantly, as far as Canadian society was concerned, attracted unskilled non-British or French workers. Like those found in mining and lumber camps, these were young, male, and usually guest workers with no intention of staying in Canada beyond one or two seasons. Railway companies found the British undesirable because they were unwilling to tolerate the low wages and primitive working conditions. Slavic and Scandinavian immigrants who had already settled on the land were also undesirable because they formed a very unstable labour

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[7] Ibid., 12-6-07.

[8] Donald Avery, "Dangerous Foreigners" European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radiacalism in Canada, 1896-1923 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1979), p. 28.

market.[9] On the other hand, the recent immigrants from Southeastern Europe and those from the Orient were quite desirable.[10] It was Frank Oliver's argument that these were not the type with whom to build a nation. However, the Prime Minister was more preoccupied with the building of a railroad, the shoring up of his power, and his position in history, than to give great consideration to immigration policy.

There was undeniable justification for railway expansion in the first decade of the twentieth century. Farmers complained about high freight rates, new regions were rapidly being settled and exploited, and expanding industry required new routes.[11] The booming economy instilled a confidence that suggested any obstacle, especially financial, could be overcome. What was questionable was Laurier's dictatorial and haphazard way of getting the railways built. Arguably, Laurier's ego was more evident here than in any other series of events in his fifteen-year reign. It became apparent that he believed his non-existent knowledge of the railway business to be immaterial. It was his intention "to be,

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[9] Ibid., pps. 25, 26.

[10] Edmonton Bulletin, 12-8-10. This was taken from an interview with Col. A.D. Davidson, land commissoner of the Canadian National Railway.

[11] R.M. Coutts, "The Railway Policy of Sir Wilfrid Laurier," pps. 8, 13.

and he was the "only begetter" of the Dominion's new transcontinental railroad. He literally forced his plan for the Grand Trunk Pacific on his cabinet, and browbeat his Ministers into acquiescence."[12] A.G.Blair, Minister of Railroads, was one who would not cower to subservience, and in 1903 he was forced to resign. To a politician as astute as Laurier, the political advantages of such a railroad were obvious enough. With no one else to take the credit, he further grasped that a significant added bonus of its successful completion would be the personal reflection on himself: "... he, just as Sir John A. Macdonald, would have "his" railway."[13] Among other things, this politically motivated railway resulted in "an overly ambitious, uncoordinated...policy."[14] The effects of this on other spheres of Government policy were to be far-reaching.

With the priority of railway construction, one of the more significant areas to be detrimentally affected was immigration policy. Selective immigration was sacrificed on the cold iron tracks of the railway. In its effort to get the railway completed as quickly as possible, the Government acquiesced to the demands of the railway

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[12] Ibid., p. 70.

[13] Ibid., pps. 148, 69.

[14] John A. Eagle, "Sir Robert Borden and the Railway Problem in Canadian Politics, 1911-1920" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1972), p. 94.

industry, and basically let them use whatever labour they desired.[15] There was also sympathy and pressure from within the Department of the Interior for rapid construction, as some felt it would better facilitate settlement, especially as the demand for homesteads began to outstrip availability.[16] Perhaps this indicates that at this point Oliver never had the full support of the Department of Immigration, or the Laurier Government, for his selective policies, although there can be little doubt that he too desired rapid railway construction.

The first effect of the impact of the railway boom after Oliver assumed office (for the construction of the Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific Railways were well underway by 1905) was felt in 1907 with the the start of the National Transcontinental, which increased the heavy demands for labour. Indicative of this expanding need for labour was the railway mileage in construction across Canada. In 1906 there were 3,000 miles, by September, 1907 another 3,011 miles, and by 1908, 4,800 miles.[17] For the next seven years 50,000 to 70,000 workers were employed annually in railway construction. Even before construction had fully begun, it was estimated that

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[15] Avery, "Dangerous Foreigners", p. 33.

[16] Sessional Papers, 1907-08, no. 25, p. 85.

[17] C.A.R., 1906, p. 18; C.A.R., 1907, p. 81; C.A.R., 1908, p. 554.

60,000 labourers would be required for 1907. Not surprisingly, then, railway construction would often be hampered by labour shortages.[18]

When these factors are combined with the boom in industries, especially in the resource-oriented industries, the previously noted increase in labourers, especially the unskilled from the Orient and Southeastern Europe, is adequately explained. Certainly Oliver would not wish to have been held responsible for these increases. Despite what was surely his desire to halt and reverse this trend, factors were at play far beyond his control. His Immigration Act of 1906 simply did not have a chance to become actual policy in the few years that followed. Given the changing circumstances brought about by the depression of late 1907, his views carried more influence, and policy finally began to be guided by legislation.

Despite the enormous pressure on Oliver to keep Canada's gates open, various changes in the Department, some subtle, some not so, were taking place under his direction. Slowly, his ideology was becoming that of the Department. The civil servants were given notice that a new man with new ideas was at the helm. Demonstrating the energy with which he would run his Department, by 1907 he

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[18] Avery, "Dangerous Foreigners", p. 27; C.A.R., 1907, p. 81; for example Edmonton Bulletin, 26-3-08.

had toured land and immigration agencies in the Canadian West, and emigration agencies in the United States, Great Britain and Europe. His ideas regarding citizenship were reinforced during his trip abroad.

> From my observations on the Continent and in Great Britain...I am convinced that if we can get the right class of British immigrants from the Old Land, they are preferable as Canadian citizens to immigrants from the Continent. The Englishman, Irishman, Scotchman, comes to Canada practically a ready made citizen; he is of the same race and speaks the same language as Canadians. Therefore he is preferable.[19]

Immigration matters, like so much else, were very much cut and dried to Oliver. He stated that he was pleased with the increasingly prevalent attitude in Britain that saw Canada as the most preferable field of settlement for immigrants. Still, he felt it was not the time for any paralysis to petrify the Department's efforts to advertise Canada. Agents were to be more vocal in letting the British know exactly what type of immigrant Canada needed.[20]

W.W. Cory had been appointed Deputy Minister on January 1, 1905, replacing James Smart, and as he tended to reflect Oliver's ideology, his services were retained. In his first annual report to Oliver of December, 1905, he

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[19] Edmonton Bulletin, 10-9-06.

[20] Edmonton Bulletin, 24-9-06, 10-9-06.

concentrated on the problems of assimilation, and, echoing the concerns of Oliver, stated that it need be gradual, so as not to impair Canadian national character. Noting the high number of British to immigrate in the previous year, and not anticipating any decrease in that number, he confidently added that "all danger in this respect, if danger there ever was, has now disappeared...."[21] It is likely that Sifton would not have been receptive to such a report of increasing numbers of British immigrants. In the report of the following year Cory suggested that while the policy of advertising Canada to the world had been productive, it was desirable to begin advertising with increased vigour in Britain.[22]

Increased efforts in the Mother Country were soon evident. The number of emigration offices there increased from six in 1905 to eight in 1907.[23] A greater reliance was placed on the use of farmer delegates, men who were successful in Canada at their occupation. Usually employed in their country of origin, they were sent not only to Britain, but to anywhere it was believed they could be of use. At $100 a month plus expenses (1907-08), Oliver felt

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21 Sessional Papers, 1906, no. 25, p. xxvii.

22 Sessional Papers, 1906-07, no. 25, p. xxxi.

23 Sessional Papers, 1906, no. 25, p. 50; Sessional Papers, 1907-08, no. 25, p. 63.

they made valuable contributions.[24] The proportions of immigration expenditures changed dramatically. In 1904-05, of a total of $617,800 spent outside of Canada, 29.3% was expended in Britain, 18.1% on the Continent, and 52.6% in the United States. By 1907-08, of a total of $594,000 expended outside of Canada, the figures were 45.4% for Britain, 12.5% for the Continent, and 42.1% for the United States.[25] This shifting emphasis as seen in the vigorous concentration of efforts and greater expenditures in Britain was all the more important when it is noted that, at the same time the contract for the North Atlantic Trading Company, an organization designed, among other things, to attract emigrants from Europe, was cancelled. The results of the Department's efforts in Britain were encouraging, as the number of British immigrants to Canada increased almost yearly during Oliver's administration (see Appendix, Table 5).

Oliver justified the new prominence of Britain in his immigration policy in an interview in the Calgary Albertan. Noting that immigration ships were loaded down with British emigrants, and that a strong tide of American immigration had set in, he stated "...we do not feel called upon to go to any trouble to attract foreigners

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[24] House of Commons Debates, cols. 9866, 9867, 4-6-08.

[25] Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 22.

here as we formerly did."[26] The need for numbers, if it had ever been primary, had definitely subsided. The reception of Canadian immigration agents in Britain and on the Continent was also a factor in this policy shift. Britain heartily welcomed and encouraged Canadian actions, and her people were inclined to emigrate to Canada, while on the Continent "...we practically have the door shut in our faces. There is, therefore, no reason whatever why we should push ourselves in where we are not wanted; [sic] when there are places where we are wanted."[27] For Oliver, the computation of the logic of this equation was simple. A large number of desirable immigrants were coming from Britain and the United States, with prospects for more. Why not spend advertising money in those countries, and ignore places which presented the prospect of less desirable immigrants, and where Canada's presence and promotional activities were opposed?

This attitude was certainly evident in the immigration expenditures of the Department during Oliver's tenure. Increasingly, more money was expended in Britain, and less on the Continent. While the immigration expenditures in America remained high under Oliver, only once, in 1908-09 (after the 1907-08 depression and public calls in Canada for limitations on assisted British

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[26] C.A.R., 1907, p. 289.

[27] Ibid., p. 289.

immigration) did American expenditures amount to more than British.[28] This is to be contrasted with immigration expenditures under the Sifton years, when in only two years, 1902-03 and 1903-04, was more money expended in Britain than America. While Oliver was Minister the average yearly expenditures were, in Britain $249,383, on the Continent $50,653, and in the United States $252,803. Under Clifford Sifton (1897-98 to 1904-05), the same average figures were $131,375, $60,225, and $160,875.[29] While these amounts are not necessarily directly comparable, the proportions are. Oliver was far more concerned with the British and American immigrant, while Sifton's interest lay with the American, and the Continental immigrants, the latter especially at the expense of the British immigrant. When one takes into account that under Sifton, much of the work in Continental Europe was done by the North Atlantic Trading Company, whose expenditures are not reflected in the above amounts, and that Continental expenditures under Oliver are a true reflection of the amounts spent, as by 1907 the Company no longer operated, these figures are all the more indicative

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[28] In 1905-06 more money was expended in the United States than in Britain. However, given that Oliver did not become Minister until mid-way through 1905, and that for the most expenditures would have already been in place by then, those expendirues cannot be seen as an accurate reflection of his policy. See Appendix, Table 4.

[29] All the above figures are from Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 22.

of policy changes.

Sifton's advertising policy in the United States had been so succesful that even before Oliver became Minister, various American interests, especially land and railroad companies, had found it necessary to embark on their own advertising campaign to keep Americans home.[30] Between the Sifton and Oliver Ministries, there was a basic continuation of advertising policy, concentrating on educating the agricultural classes, especially through the use of country journals, papers and exhibition fairs. This included an extra effort among the recent German and Scandinavian settlers who were thought of as very desirable.[31] Besides emphasizing Canadian agricultural advantages, literature also stressed Canadian laws and the respect it was accorded. This had significant impact on American settlers who wrote home, praising the Royal North-West Mounted Police, and the absence of an American "Wild West" in Canada.[32] As witness to the success of this course of action, by 1908 there were reports that some fairs would not allow the participation of Canadian immigration agents.[33] This hardly inhibited Canadian

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[30] Report of Inspector of Agencies in the United States. Sessional Papers, 1906, no. 25, p. 63.

[31] Report of Inspector of Agencies in the United States. Sessional Papers, 1907-08, no. 25, p. 82.

[32] Sessional Papers, 1911, no. 25, p. 90.

[33] Sessional Papers, 1908, no. 25, p. 86.

actions, and by 1910 immigration offices in the United States had increased from sixteen to nineteen, and had expanded from central America to cover the breadth of the country, from Atlantic to Pacific.[34]

One significant departure in Oliver's American immigration policy was his more determined effort to bring Canadian ex-patriates, especially French Canadians, home. Although these efforts had previously been part of Government policy -- it was a political necessity in Quebec -- it was the Department's increased vigour under Oliver that made 1906 a significant turning point. Employing French-Canadian agents, the increasing success of this special effort centred in New England, was referred to a number of times over the years by W.J. White, the United States Inspector of Agencies and Press Agent.[35] In 1907 the Department went a step further and established an agency in Biddeford, Maine, to deal exclusively with the French Canadian element in the region.[36] The goal was to re-locate these people on farms in Quebec and Ontario.[37] The effort no doubt reflected

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[34] Sessional Papers, 1911, no. 25, p. 87.

[35] See Sessional Papers, 1906-07, no. 25, p. 77; Sessional Papers, 1907-08, no. 25 p. 82; and Sessional Papers, 1901, no. 25, p. 83 for examples.

[36] Karel Bicha, "Canadian Immigration Policy and the American Farmer, 1896-1914" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1963), p. 86.

[37] Sessional Papers, 1911, no. 25, p. 92.

Oliver's belief that the very best citizen for Canada was a Canadian. His preference had always been, whenever possible, to get a Canadian to move West, or to fill a vacant farm position. It was also indicative of the consistent and often immense political pressure placed on Oliver by such Quebec Members of Parliament as F.D. Monk, Henri Bourassa, Armand Lavergne, Ernest Paquet, A.N. Worthington and others, in that province's attempt to increase the number of French-speaking immigrants coming to Canada, thereby continuing to guarantee Quebec strength in the country.[38]

The results of this pressure also affected the shift in Canada's Continental immigration policy. French immigration to Canada, and in particular Western Canada, had been dismal under Sifton, and long before. In fact, French and Belgian immigration combined for the years 1900-01 to 1904-05 averaged only 1,463 a year, though for the most part these figures increased yearly.[39] Still, they were not enough for the vocal federal Quebec bloc. It was politically necessary, if nothing else, for the Immigration Department to respond to these demands for action, and starting in January, 1906 the Canadian Government entered into a new relationship with France's

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[38] See for example, House of Commons Debates, col. 9840, 4-5-06; col. 1141, 9-1-07; col. 1395, 14-1-07; col. 5183, 13-3-11.

[39] Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 6.

booking agencies to better facilitate French immigration.[40] In spite of this, Oliver did not forsee a large increase in these numbers. And, in Oliver's opinion, this was unfortunate because they were such a civilized and agricultural people. The problem was, they also were a home-loving nation, and not given to emigrating. Their Empire also forced them to carry a "stupendous burden of militarism," and it was unlikely they could ever afford an emigration to Canada equal in numbers to that of Britain.[41] As well, French emigration laws made it difficult for immigration agents to advertise publicly.[42]

However, these realities did not stop Oliver from attempting to encourage such immigration. From 1907-08 to 1908-09 eight new pamphlets were printed by the Department for use in France.[43] By 1909 France had three Canadian immigration agents and Belgium had one, up from one in each in 1905. His actions did not go without some positive results, as yearly immigration from the two countries from 1905-06 to 1911-12 was 3,028, more than double the results

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[40] House of Common Debates, col. 176, 4-12-07.

[41] Edmonton Bulletin, 5-10-06; House of Common Debates, col. 6167, 9-4-07.

[42] Sessional Papers, p. 80, 1907-08, no. 25.

[43] Three in 1907-08 and five in 1908-09. Sessional Papers, 1907-08 , p. 80, no. 25; 1908-09, p. 84, no. 25.

of the Sifton years.[44] Such results also tended to pacify his French-Canadian critics. These immigrants adapted quickly to Canadian ways, and tended to settle in Quebec, but were not limited to that province.[45]

The changes in France and Belgium, however, were minor compared with the wholesale changes occurring elsewhere on the Continent. The most visible and far-reaching of these alterations dealt with the North Atlantic Trading Company. The Company had been a key element in Sifton's immigration policy. Though formed in 1899 and utilized by the Government from that time, it did not officially have a contract with the Canadian Government until November, 1904.[46] It was a secret syndicate of booking agents operating in European countries where local laws prohibited direct emigration efforts on the part of foreign Governments. The Company received one pound sterling for every immigrant passing through their hands from all European countries except France, Belgium, Turkey, Greece, Italy, and Spain. There

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[44] House of Common Debates, col. 102, 16-11-09; Immigration Facts and Figures, p.6.

[45] Joseph A.C. Ethier, Liberal Member of Parliament for Two Mountains, congratulated the Government on the good job it had done in immigration matters, especially with repatriation. House of Commons Debates, col. 6140, 10-5-09. Sessional Papers, p. 79, 1908-09, no. 25.

[46] John W. Dafoe, Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, Ltd., 1931), p. 320; House of Common Debates, col. 7906, 22-6-05.

were, however, certain restrictions placed on the number of immigrants for which the Company would be paid. Funds given for non-German settlers from Galicia, Bukowinia, and Poland, were not to exceed 5,000 pounds per year.[47] There was also a Government grant of 750 pounds if the Company spent 1,000 pounds in Scandinavia, and brought a specified number of those people to Canada. They were also supplemented to the amount of $15,000 a year for publicity efforts, usually involving pamphlets, and private canvasses. The Company concentrated on obtaining agricultural immigrants, and no bonuses were to be paid to them until the immigrant had arrived and passed Canadian regulations.[48] From June, 1901 to June, 1906, the Company received $241,100 in bonuses and an additional $15,485 for publicity efforts. The tangible results of this expenditure were 46,719 immigrants (1901-02 to 1904-05), of whom only 8,902 were from Northern Europe.[49]

While a private member of the House, Oliver was much against the Government's contract with the Company, on the basis that it furthered indiscriminate immigration.[50]

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47 House of Common Debates, col. 9321, 12-7-05; House of Commons Debates, col. 196, 14-3-06.

48 House of Commons Debates, cols. 9322, 9328, 9325, 12-7-05; House of Common Debates, col. 179, 14-3-06.

49 Northern Europe included Holland, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Switerzerland. House of Common Debates, cols. 830, 831, 832, 29-3-06.

50 Edmonton Bulletin, 10-8-00.

Though the Opposition would raise many other complaints, often revolving around either the secret nature of the Company and its members, or questionable Government intrigues, the reason for Oliver's concern remained the contract's effect on Canada. In his mind, it was very much in doubt whether or not Canada was getting a good deal for its money.[51] However, Oliver realized the advantages and necessity of having immigration efforts in Europe, and despite his personal opposition to the Company's contract, was not willing to have it terminated immediately upon his becoming Minister. Though his actions might, on the surface, have often seemed impulsive, Oliver was not typically a rash man, and usually thought his decisions through carefully. Although he did eventually cancel the Company's contract, it was not until after he was Minister for a year, visited Amsterdam to investigate the Company personally, developed a new departmental policy, and gave the matter his "due consideration."[52] Ironically, as the contract remained Government policy, Oliver was placed in

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[51] Those reputed to be benefitting personally were Lord Strathcona (Canada's High Commissioner in London) and W.T.R. Preston (Commissioner of Emigration in London). Both were involved with the negotiation of the Company's contract -- Strathcona in 1899, and Preston in 1903. C.A.R., 1907, p. 573 and House of Common Debates, col. 9320, 12-7-05. For Oliver's reasons see also House of Common Debates, col 1833, 20-4-06.

[52] The North Atlantic Trading Company contract was cancelled April 14, 1906. House of Common Debates, col. 1836, 20-4-06; House of Common Debates, col. 1071, 17-12-06; House of Common Debates, col. 1567, 15-12-09.

the position of having to defend the contract for a number of months after his appointment.

Though there was a clause in the contract which stipulated that four years' notice be given before its termination, Oliver believed he had just reasons for overriding that and cancelling it immediately.[53] In his opinion there were two leading features of the contract. "One was the special encouragement of people from Northern Europe, and the other was a limitation upon the encouragement to people from Southern Europe." Unfortunately, it was obvious to Oliver that, in the two or three years after the contract's signing, the former were not increasing in numbers, while the latter were. "That argued to us," Oliver continued, "that the Company was accepting the advantage of what might be a natural flow of immigration from certain countries, and not using due exertion to secure immigration from whence we considered it desirable."[54] Given that the the number of Southern European immigrants on whom the Company could receive a bonus was limited, Oliver's primary criticism was that too few Scandinavians were immigrating to Canada. Perhaps that fact could have been less important if the Company had demonstrated that they were at least trying to divert some of the flow of Scandinavian immigrants to the

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[53] House of Common Debates, col. 9322, 12-7-05.

[54] House of Common Debates, col. 5971, 22-6-06.

United States to Canada. Of course, the United States had the advantage of a considerable number of established Scandinavian settlements which drew a large number of immigrants through chain migration. But, as the Company spent only one-fifth of its allotted funds for publicity, it was evident that they were not even willing to make an effort to break that chain.

The only conclusion Oliver could reach was that the Company was not carrying out the spirit of the contract.[55] The Company, in turn, could hardly argue that they were enticing immigrants to come to Canada. And, while it might be argued that the primary role of the Company was not to attract immigrants to Canada directly from their homeland, but rather to direct them once they arrived at the European port of embarkation, a specialized Company -- as Oliver was to conclude -- was hardly necessary to do that. Thus, Oliver decreed that no money was to be paid to the North Atlantic Trading Company after November 30, 1906.[56] The times had changed. Canada had once needed all the immigrants it could get; by 1906, given the numbers it had received, and was continuing to receive, the country could afford to be selective. It is important to note that the definition of selective had changed. Defenders of the contract would have claimed that in seeking only

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[55] Ibid., col. 5974, 22-6-06.

[56] Ibid., col. 1838, 20-4-06.

agricultural immigrants, the Company was exercising a selective policy. However, in Oliver's eyes, a selective policy included cultural as well as economic criteria. Immigrants from Southern Europe were simply culturally alien and therefore undesirable.

Though immigration policy had begun to shift in the direction that Oliver desired, it was not until late 1907, and because of events once again beyond his control, that the shift became more permanent. The boom that had been developing over the previous decade reached its peak in mid-1907, and was followed by a sharp recession. Full employment and a shortage of labour were dramatically reversed in the winter of 1907-08. Wages fell, while the cost of living, prices, and the number of strikes all rose.[57] An angry, bitter mood replaced the optimism of months before, and scapegoats were sought and found lurking everywhere. Earlier, in April, 1907, a wave of panic submerged the New York stock exchange, causing chaos and continental recession to follow in its wake. The Department of Labour fancied the cause to be this American problem.[58] Others in Central Canada pointed to speculation and borrowing in the rapid and excessive spending practices of Western Canada. Eventually, its warnings

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[57] Sessional Papers, 1907-08, no. 36, pps. 8, 9.

[58] J.G. MacGregor, Edmonton: A History, 2nd ed. (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1975), p. 163; Sessional Papers, 1909, no. 36, p. 8.

having been ignored, the financial establishment cut Western credit, and while this decreased the effect of the depression in Central Canada, it increased effects in the west.[59] Poor crop yield, an influx late in the year of unemployed Americans, and a continual excess of imports over exports were also cited.[60] Whatever the cause, Oliver was presented with his goose, and could no doubt see the golden egg of tighter immigration restrictions on the horizon. However, the labour was to be a difficult one.

Many cities and towns did not appreciate the increased burden and responsibility of abnormally high numbers of unemployed in their districts. The open doors of immigration policy had allowed the entry of what Oliver deemed excessive numbers, many of whom were also in his view undesirable. Ironically, but understandably, given the nature of politics, Oliver was blamed for this situation. The Montreal Star gave a typical indictment of Oliver when it accused him of toeing the line of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association by enticing so many immigrants to come to Canada for whom there was no employment, thereby creating a cheap labour pool for Canadian businesses. Not only did this have a detrimental effect on Canada, but it also inflicted extremely cruel

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[59] L.G. Thomas, The Liberal Party in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), pps. 54, 55; C.A.R., 1907, p. 19.

[60] C.A.R., 1907, p. 19.

hardship upon new arrivals.[61] Oliver would not have liked such criticism, but given his views regarding Ministerial responsibility, he accepted them with nothing less than a stiff upper lip, and a quarterstaff in hand -- for defense or offense, as needed.

In this case it was offense, and Oliver laid into the Opposition, critically wounding their arguments by exposing their own hypocrisy. He invited the Conservatives to remember their cries of a year earlier, when, with bellowings for labour heard nationally at all levels, from farmers to factories, they jumped on the bandwagon and critized inefficient Government policy, imploring them to feed the need. If, after that attack, any life was left in the Opposition, Oliver removed it by daring any one of them to suggest that the the Government should have then, or at any time, neglected immigration policy, as the Conservatives had done.[62] Pointing out the dramatic increase in the prosperity and international image of Canada under the Liberals, as opposed to that which was accomplished under the Conservatives, he claimed the problems of late 1907 to be merely a temporary setback, one the Government could not forsee, and was not responsible for. If anything, he argued, the recession was a reflection of the success of Government economic

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[61] As quoted in the Edmonton Bulletin, 27-12-07.

[62] House of Common Debates, col. 6711, 13-4-08.

policies as the boom had expanded so rapidly, immigration had difficulties in keeping up with needs. He was quite satisified with, and willing to stand by, any policy which introduced 300,000 new people to the country annually, a figure of which he considered four-fifths to be actively contributing to the economy, even at the depths of the depression. He concluded his defense by challenging the Opposition to find something they could justly critize.[63] Their roar subsided to a dull moan.

After responding to Opposition howls over the labour situation, Oliver got down to the business of tailoring the immigration policy to fit prevailing conditions. That meant greater restriction, more careful selection and an implementation of the ideas behind the 1906 Immigration Act. He was to receive criticism in Parliament throughout 1908 on subjects ranging from bonuses, to immigrants sponsored by charities, to the growing number of recent immigrants in jail. However, little could be found wanting in the general direction he was trying to guide immigration policy. In a double-barrelled effort to stem the growing unemployment of the previous year, and to eliminate the problem of poorer immigrant labourers who, for the most part, had no intention of settling in Canada, policy changes were outlined in a memorandum circulated by the Immigration Branch dated May 12, 1908. It stated,

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[63] Ibid., cols. 1324, 1325, 15-1-08.

> Notice is hereby given that the only class of immigrants wanted in Canada at the present time are experienced farm labourers, farmers financially able to take homesteads or purchase lands, and female domestic servants.
>
> The demand for railway labour is filled for this season.
>
> ...the regulation now in operation requiring every immigrant 18 years of age or over, to have in his possession at least $25 cash at the time of his landing, besides ticket to destination, will be enforced strictly and impartially in the case of all immigrants outside of the classes above mentioned.[64]

Such restrictions would cut down on the numbers of unskilled immigrant labourers and thus diminish the possibility of higher unemployment, and at the same time would reduce the number of Southeastern European and charity-aided immigrants, who most often were these untrained immigrants. Oliver was no doubt quite pleased with the direction finally being taken.

An order in council was passed on September 11, 1908 further tightening the above requirements. It was based on Section 20 of the Immigration Act, which gave the Governor in Council the right to require an immigrant to have a certain amount of money as a prerequisite for admission to Canada.[65] The order in council stated that, given prevailing labour conditions, and the probable lack of demand for immigrants in the upcoming winter, male or

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[64] Sessional Papers, 1910, no. 25, p. 62.

[65] Statutes, Chap. 93, Section 20, 1906.

female immigrants over eighteen years of age arriving at Canadian ports between January 1 and February 15, 1909 would be required to have $50, in addition to a ticket to their destination. This prerequisite could be waived if evidence were produced insuring either that the immigrant was going to definite employment, or to relatives or friends who would take care of him. On February 15 the amount required was to be reduced to $25 and remain there until further ordered.[66] Despite the fact that such requirements were to Oliver's liking, obviously there were immense pressures placed on him to introduce restrictions, not only from the Opposition, but from within the Government, and from the local municipalities. Certainly the Opposition could no longer accuse him of bending to the wishes of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association.

The immigration figures for 1908-09 reflect the altered circumstances guiding the nation, and the figures of the last four years of Oliver's tenure prove that 1907-08 was little more than an abnormal blip which Oliver was not in a position to correct. Continental immigration fell dramatically, from 204,157 in 1907-08 to 87,076 in 1908-09, and by 1909-10 it had begun a rebound to 104,996. In 1907-08, 20.5% were agriculturalists, 30.9% were general labourers and 27.6% were skilled labourers. The same figures for 1908-09 were 29.4%, 21.1%, and 21.7%. A

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[66] The Canada Gazette, p. 798, 19-9-08.

continuance of this trend is seen in the figures for 1909-10, when the economic flucuations in the country had more or less settled. Agriculturalists made up 35.4%, general labourers 19.2% and skilled labourers 19.3%.[67] The comments of J. Obed Smith, Commissioner of the Emigration Branch covering the United Kingdom and Europe, in his report of 1908-09 reflected the successful implementation of the changes that Oliver desired, when he concluded that "the intention of the...regulations has, in my opinion, been effected [and that]...during the last fiscal year Canada received as many immigrants as she required, and who could be suitably settled in the Dominion, and the percentage of undesirables was reduced to a minimum." Though the number of immigrants rejected was to increase dramatically in 1910 and 1911, for 1909 the number was 509, a low for the Oliver years.[68] The Minister had finally been able to get a grasp on the virtually rudderless policy.

It is well to note that these changes, and others implemented in 1908-09, were also taken with the welfare

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[67] The cited statistics do not include American figures. In any case, they increased in each of the three years, while the percentage of agriculturalists decreased, to a low of 60.8% in 1909-10, which suggests that European labourers were perhaps being replaced with American. See Appendix, Table 6. Immigration Facts and Figures, pps. 20, 21.

[68] Sessional Papers, p. 64, 1910, no. 25, 1910; Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 11.

of the immigrant in mind. The poorer immigrants seeking the non-existing unskilled positions would have probably exhausted their funds simply to get to Canada. To arrive, and discover they could not secure employment would place them in destitution, and the nation under great stress. An order in council was passed on June 23, 1908 bringing into force Sections 40 and 58 of the Immigration Act, the former stating that taverns must have their food and lodging prices visibly listed, while the latter concerned penalties to be established in various Canadian cities for the Act's violation.[69] Significantly, this included Toronto and Winnipeg where there were large congregations of immigrants and unemployed. Although Frank Oliver was for greater immigration restrictions, he was also cognizant of the ordeal immigrants went through on their journey. It was his desire to make the process as smooth and accommodating as possible.

Two topics of much debate throughout 1908 and 1909 were the Government's use of the bonus, and the role of charity-assisted immigration in the building of the nation. Oliver spent a great deal of time and effort -- no doubt wasted time and effort, in his opinion -- explaining over and over the Government's bonus policy to the Opposition. One reason for the Conservatives' persistent badgering, and the resultant confusion, was probably

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[69] The Canada Gazette, p. 2, 4-7-08.

Oliver's stand on bonusing while a private Member of Parliament. There was a major difference in the definitions of a bonus before and after 1905, but this was immaterial to the Opposition. In July of 1904, Oliver declared in the House that the policy of paying bonuses to steamship companies was a failure, "...money absolutely thrown away, or worse than thrown away...."[70] The basic flaw in the bonus system, claimed Oliver, was that steamship companies were paid extra for immigrants they were already transporting. As transportation was their business, for which they were well paid, a bonus to them was redundant. Upon becoming Minister Oliver declared that the policy would remain, while being taken under consideration.[71]

By late 1906 the new policy was in place, and put forth in a Departmental circular distributed to booking agents in the United Kingdom. It was Oliver's opinion that the basic principle of bonusing was beneficial. Money was paid for results. This was one of the few concepts involved in the North Atlantic Trading Company contract that he admired, and it was reflected in new departmental policy.[72] The plan outlined established in Britain a bonus of one pound per adult male or female over eighteen years

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[70] House of Commons Debates, cols. 7323, 7324, 21-7-04.

[71] House of Commons Debates, col. 9318, 12-7-05.

[72] House of Commons Debates, col. 1566, 15-12-09.

who was engaged for twelve months previous as either a farmer, farm labourer, gardner, stableman, carter, railway serviceman, navvy, miner, or female domestic servant. The bonus was ten shillings for immigrants between one and eighteen years of age. The circular concluded, "no bonus will be paid to head officer[s] of steamship or railway companies."[73] This last sentence was most important because it completely changed the nature of the bonus. Frank Oliver described the booking agents, licensed by the Governments of the countries in which they worked, as "...the people whose business in life is to sell tickets of transportation without regard to the point to which the transportation carries [the immigrant]." As they received a certain amount of money regardless of where they directed an emigrant, Oliver defended the policy by pointing out that the bonus was an inducement for the booking agents to send emigrants to Canada instead of to the United States. It was then in the best interest of the booking agent to direct the immigrant to Canada.[74]

The policy most significantly different from Sifton's was that immigrants had to prove they were employed in a specified trade, whereas before they had only to declare their intention of becoming so employed once in Canada, a

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[73] House of Commons Debates, cols. 478, 479, 3-12-06.

[74] House of Common Debates, col. 5021, 13-3-08; col. 6158, 9-5-07, col. 6158.

policy which Oliver believed was inefficient.[75] Although Continental booking agents were also paid a bonus, it was only half that paid in Britain.[76] Oliver probably thought long and hard over the decision to give a bonus for immigrants on the Continent, but given the desirability of Northern Europeans, and the immigration propaganda vaccuum in Europe created by the cancellation of the North Atlantic Trading Company contract he realized there was still a need for efforts there. Still, he limited the bonus to booking agents in Scandinavia, Holland, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Prussia, France, Belgium and Switzerland. In Iceland, the bonus went directly to the steamship companies, and transportation fares were reduced to that extent.[77] Italy, home of many seasonal labourers, was noticeably absent.

The policy was not restricted to Europe, as a modified version was also put into place in the United States. There, sub-agents were paid on a commission basis, $3 per man, $2 per woman, and $1 per child. In all cases, bonuses were only paid on immigrants coming to Canada for the first time.[78] The particulars of this facet of the

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[75] House of Commons Debates, col. 1664, 17-4-06.

[76] House of Commons Debates, col. 6162, 9-5-07.

[77] Edmonton Bulletin, 21-3-07; House of Commons Debates, col. 6714, 13-4-08.

[78] House of Commons Debates, col. 1287, 15-1-08; col. 178, 14-3-06.

immigration policy were not static. In January of 1908, the bonus to Continental booking agents was raised from 10 shillings per adult and 5 shillings per child to equal that paid in Britain.[79] Perhaps this was to satisfy the renewed demands of railway construction, as the number of general labourers had decreased from 67,000 in 1907-08 to 26,000 in 1908-09.[80] However, by the following year, the only classes on which bonuses were paid were farmers, farm labourers, and female domestic servants. Railway navvies were no longer included.[81] Perhaps this was Oliver's way of cutting back on the number of undesirable general labourers. It might also demonstrate either Oliver's increasing power in cabinet, or the gradual acceptance of his views there, especially in light of Laurier's desire to keep railway construction at a fevered pitch.

The Opposition was unhappy with this policy regardless of the particulars. Sam Hughes, Member of Parliament for Victoria and Haliburton (Ontario), blamed the policy for attracting undesirables. F.D. Monk, representing the riding of Jacques Cartier (Quebec), claimed it never attracted an immigrant. Armand Lavergne, elected for Montmagny, called it a dangerous policy, and feared that it might result in the lowering of the quality

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[79] Ibid., col. 3429, 19-2-08.

[80] Immigration Facts and Figures, pps. 20, 21.

[81] 040-p 21-3-10, col. 5807.

of immigrants, and eventually Canadian societal standards.[82] That Canada was receiving a sufficient number of immigrants and that a bonus was wasteful and not needed to bring about increases, especially at the risk of attracting the more undesirable elements of Europe, appeared to be the prevailing argument of the Conservatives.[83] Their fear was probably based more on the latter part of that argument, given that in the first four full years of Oliver's tenure only $64,616 was spent on European bonuses.[84] Significantly, over $50,000 of this was spent on British immigrants. This suggests that concerns regarding immigration selection and restriction were not necessarily racially motivated, but were based more on the contribution an immigrant could make.

In the light of this Opposition argument Oliver's defence, as given in the Edmonton Bulletin, was simple. "Now it ought to be clear to any reasonably well-informed man, even in Eastern Canada, that the West needs immigrants, even more of them than we are getting at present." Rhetorically, the question then posed was how this end was to be accomplished without the bonus, if even by using such methods Canada was not getting enough

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[82] House of Commons Debates, col. 7024, 7026, 18-5-09; cols. 6145, 6146, 9-4-07.

[83] Ibid., col. 6663, 13-4-08.

[84] Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 18.

immigrants.[85] In Parliament Oliver defended the policy by claiming that the mandate expressed by the House in the 1906 session called for an active, energetic, effective and aggressive immigration policy.[86] It was Oliver's opinion that a bonus on immigrants could only help foster that end.

Part of the Opposition's anxiety over the bonus stemmed from its intimate connection with charity-assisted immigration. Stephen Leacock echoed the orthodox Conservative criticism of the Government's support of charitable institutions aiding immigrants to Canada in his unorthodox way. Noting the change in the nature of immigrants over the previous ten years, he lamented how the once adventurous, enterprising types, consumed with passion to build up a nation, had become "mere herds of the proletariat of Europe, the lowest classes of industrial society, without home and work." He added that they were "...fit objects indeed for philanthropic pity, but indifferent material from which to build the commonwealth of the future."[87] James S. Woodsworth, though sympathizing with the plight of the poor immigrant,

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[85] Edmonton Bulletin, 11-5-08.

[86] House of Commons Debates, col. 6703, 13-4-08.

[87] Stephen Leacock, "Canada and the Immigration Problem," in Howard Palmer, ed., Immigration and the Rise of Multiculturalism, (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing, 1975), p.48.

described them as "hopeless, helpless city savages...[the] shiftless, broken down men, widows, deserted women, and their families."[88] Conservative Member of Parliament F.D. Monk feared that Canada would soon be receiving the hordes overtaking Europe, and believed that the Government should be more concerned about the immigrant's ability to conform to Canadian standards and less worried about assisting them to get here. Henri Bourassa, Liberal Member of Parliament for Labelle complained that too many of these assisted immigrants were criminals, and objected to Canada becoming a dumping ground for the exiles of Europe.[89] Who were these immigrants, victims of such wrath, and why was Oliver, usually so conscientiously nationalistic, letting them in if they posed such a threat to Canada?

The Salvation Army was the largest organization aiding the poor to immigrate to Canada, and such debate usually centred around it. Most of those it aided came from urban Britain.[90] There were many misconceptions about

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[88] James S. Woodsworth, Strangers within our gates, p. 50.

[89] House of Commons Debates, col. 6663, 13-4-08; col. 6176, 9-4-07.

[90] In 1903 the Salvation Army established a Department of Migration and Settlement for the transportation and settlement of the poor of Great Britain. In that year it received a Government bonus of $500. The first Army charter sailed for Canada on April 26, 1905, and none of the approximate 1,100 passengers came from the slums of London. R.G. Moyles states that in 1906-07 the Army received $8124.90 in bonuses and an additional $25,000 in grants. Bonuses were paid only on

its role, which resulted in many unjustified complaints. Not all were convinced that such charitable aid was so detrimental. The C.A.R. of 1906 felt those sent out were excellent settlers, carefully selected and useful in the building of the country.[91] These immigrants were the poorer, less fortunate of Britain's industrial cities, perhaps semi-skilled, and often less than that. As Thomas Howell, Secretary of Immigration for the Salvation Army, outlined to the Canadian Government, although these men were not willing to sacrifice their ability to make a living at their trades by leaving the larger cities, the Army directed no immigrant to a locality without first inquiring as to labour conditions there, to insure that a particular immigrant could be employed, and "[to] protect [the] labour interest."[92]

Though Oliver defended the Army's actions, he was

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agricultural immigrants, though the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada claimed that most soon became industrial workers. However, Moyles estimates that 75% of Army immigrants settled on farms in Ontario or out West. In February of 1907 Commissioner Coombes of the Army stated that the Army had brought 20,000 immigrants to Canada, of which only 20 were deported. Moyles estimated that by 1914 the Army had brought to Canada in excess of 100,000 immigrants. Donald Avery, "Dangerous Foreigners" European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1886-1932 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1979), p. 20; R.G. Moyles, The Blood and Fire in Canada: A History of the Salvation Army in the Dominion 1882-1976 (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Limited, 1977), pps. 140, 141, 144, 145; C.A.R., 1907, p. 290.

[91] C.A.R., 1906, p. 281.

[92] House of Commons Debates, col. 4455, 11-3-07.

sensitive to the problems of city-directed immigration. Given his strong Presbyterian beliefs, he would not have been adverse to the efforts of such a religious organization. Still, his interest and primary concern was in settling and strengthening the West, which was to be reflected in the restrictions soon implemented. He noted in Parliament that the Salvation Army received no Government assistance, and that they were paid bonuses on the same basis as other booking agents. However their London office did receive a yearly $5000 stipend, in light of the fact that they assumed all responsibility for the immigrants they sent to Canada.[93] Though this would seem to be Government assistance, Oliver never considered it as such.

Charitable institutions in Europe, such as the Quebec and St. John Colonization Society, the Ottawa Valley Immigration Aid Society, and the Western Canadian Immigration Association, were guided by the same policy that controlled regular immigration policy. Overseas actions were, in Lord Strathcona's words, "carefully confined to the encouragement of agricultural emigrants'...." However, the depressed economy, Oliver's own desire to have done what was best for Canada, and Opposition pressure, combined to force Oliver to produce a lengthy order in council, based on Section 10 of the

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[93] House of Commons Debates, 11-3-07, col. 4455.

Immigration Act. Passed on April 15, 1908, it was designed to make the situation clear to all involved, and to avoid all possible repercussions. The order bluntly stated the problem: the operations of charitable and philanthropic organizations were confined to "the unemployed, destitute and incompetent classes in the congested centres of population...from which it is very unlikely that the needs of Canada can be properly supplied." Their immigration might alleviate European conditions, but it would only compound problems in Canada. The Department of the Interior suggested the need for an independent physical and moral inspection to determine an immigrant's suitability for Canada. To assure its validity, it was to be certified by Canada's assistant commissioner of emigration in Britain. It was decided that immigrants given any money which aided their immigration were to be required to have such written authority, and to immigrate within 60 days of receiving it.[94] The goal was to safeguard Canadian interests, and to protect the immigrant by not leading him astray with promises of non-existent jobs.

The annual Immigration Department report of of 1909 suggested that the regulation's impact was immediate. Charitable institutions quickly accepted the conditions

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94 Sessional Papers, 1909, no. 25, p. 63; The Canada Gazette, 1905, pps. 62, 63.

set by the order in council, and the numbers of charitably aided immigrants to Canada diminished.[95] Though this by and large satiated the Opposition's appetite, it raised concerns in Britain. J. Obed Smith, in his 1908-09 annual report to Lord Strathcona, stated that "there was a tendency in some quarters to construe these regulations as wholesale restrictions, an indication that Canada wanted no more emigrants," but he added that subsequent numbers showed that Canada received as many immigrants as required, with a decrease in the number of undesirables.[96] The number of British on which a bonus was paid went from 16,193 in 1908 to 8,046 in 1909, and to 10,682 in 1910, while the number of British deportations began to decrease rapidly from the pre-War high of 1,235 in 1909, to 486 in 1910, when the effects of the regulation were first felt in Canada, suggesting the validity of Smith's observations.[97]

Gradually, then, it appeared as if quantity was finally being sacrificed for quality. The number of British and American immigrants were rising, while the numbers of agriculturalists were also increasing. Although Oliver had desired in 1906 to change the immigration policy to bring about this end, he was stymied by

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95 Sessional Papers, 1908-09, no. 25, p. 64.

96 Ibid., p. 62.

97 Immigration Facts and Figures, pps.18, 17.

circumstances, most especially railway construction, beyond his control. However, it was circumstances equally beyond his control, manifested most vividly in the economic collapse of 1907-08, that enabled him to revise that policy. As the number of rejections rose, and the number of deportations fell, it became obvious that he had constructed a solid fence around Canada. The changes from 1906 to 1910 which had enabled him to bring into effect a more selective and restrictive immigration policy made it possible for him to introduce an even tighter immigration bill in 1910. Given the problems created by large numbers of cheap immigrant labourers, Canadians seemed to care less about what the economic contribution of an immigrant could be, and were increasingly receptive to an immigration policy driven by cultural and not economic concerns.

Chapter V

"...the weeding out process"

The Immigration Act of 1910 and Other Problems

By 1908, as the number of immigrants from outside Britain and America dwindled, immigration policy had generally begun to shift in the direction that Oliver desired. However, he was still unsatisfied with policy as it stood. In the last few years of his administration of the Immigration Department, Oliver was confronted with two major problems which jeopardized his vision of Canada, neither of which were sufficiently addressed by his Immigration Act of 1906. One involved an influx of Orientals in 1907-08, and the other concerned a threatened influx of black Americans in 1910-11. His solutions to these problems demonstrated the confusing reactions matters of immigration evoked. The issue was emotionally charged and rationality was sometimes sacrificed when public pressures became too heavy. In those cases, the powerful forces of ethnocentrism, xenophobia and economics combined to stimulate strong hostilities in many Canadians. This resulted in legislation closing the door to these immigrants. In such an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty, racism also came to be a less potent force behind the movement for such legislation. Besides the situations presented by the Orientals and the blacks,

Oliver had other problems to deal with in the last years of his administration. He continued with his attempts to implement greater restrictions and more careful selection with the introduction of various amendments to his Immigration Act of 1906, efforts which climaxed in the Immigration Act of 1910.

The immigration of Orientals, including the Japanese, Hindu, and especially the Chinese, was a thorn in Oliver's side almost from the day he became the Minister of the Interior. Oriental immigration was considered to be a problem by many Canadians, who usually justified their concerns on economic and cultural bases. Average middle-class English and French Canadians saw themselves as having little in common with the alien peoples of Asia.[1] This lack of commonality bred fear that the manifestation of differences might alter what Canada, in their conception, should be. This fear was most acute in British Columbia, the place of first contact between the Asian and the British or European Canadian, and where the majority of the Orientals settled and worked. As the number of Orientals increased they further encroached on several industries heretofore dominated by white labourers. Working for 30% to 50% less than white labourers,

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[1] Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1982), p. 32.

Orientals were quickly faced with their wrath.[2] Hostilities erupted, eventually exploding in the Vancouver riots of September, 1907, when the Oriental districts of that city were invaded and ransacked.[3] In the province's effort to dam this Asian flood, it passed several Acts regulating Oriental immigration into British Columbia. Each Act was disallowed by a Federal order in council on the recommendation of the Minister of Justice.[4] However, the continual pressures virtually forced Oliver into introducing some sort of legislation to address the situation.

Canada had long employed a head tax as a method of

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[2] Judith Hill, "Alberta's Black Settlers: A Study of Canadian Immigration Policy and Practice," (M.A. Thesis, University of Alberta, 1981), p. 15.

[3] The growing number of Orientals in British Columbia is evident in a comparison of the 1901 and 1911 censuses. In 1901 there were 19,482 Orientals (Chinese, Japanese, and Hindu). In 1911 their numbers had increased to 30,465. As a percentage of British Columbia's total population, in 1901 Asians formed 10.9%, while the proportion had decreased to 7.8% in 1911. Significantly, the number of East Indians increased from 84 (0.04%) in 1901 to 2,292 (0.58%) in 1911, creating another very visible minority, whose countrymen in India, it was believed, could easily swamp the Pacific coast of Canada. These figures are all the more important when it is realized that greater restriction of Orientals was exercised by 1908, suggestting that their increase had taken place in an even shorter span of just over seven years. Fifth Census of Canada. 1911, p. 370; Peter Ward, White Canada Forever (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978), Table 2.

[4] Though other Acts were passed and disallowed prior to 1905, during Oliver's tenure, the British Columbia Government passed Acts in April, 1905 and February, 1908. Both Acts were disallowed within the month. The Canada Gazette, 1905, p. 2296; Ibid., 1908, p. 2300.

limiting the immigration of Chinese labour to Canada. A $50 tax was first put into place in 1885. It was doubled to $100 in 1900, and further increased to $500 in 1903.[5] Many believed that the main reason Chinese immigrated to Canada was to profit from higher wages, only to return to China when they had accumulated sufficient funds.[6] Because he had little exposure to them, Oliver was not as concerned with the influx of Orientals as he was with other groups. In 1908 when 12,108 Orientals immigrated to Canada, and the threat of an Oriental flood was at its strongest, there were few Japanese, and only a small colony of some 250 Chinese in Edmonton.[7] However, Oliver believed that those most closely acquainted with the situation were those most qualified to speak, and this led him to support an amendment, presented by Aulay Morrison, the Liberal Member of Parliament from New Westminster (British Columbia), in 1900 (when there would have been a negligible number of Oriental Edmontonians), which would have virtually prohibited Chinese and Japanese from

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[5] Sessional Papers, 1909, no. 36, p. 98.

[6] This was the conclusion of William Lyon Mackenzie King's Royal Commission into the methods employed inducing Oriental labourers to come to Canada. Ibid., p. 105. It is also a view expressed in James S. Woodsworth, Strangers within our gates, The Social History of Canada Series (1909; reprint ed., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), p. 142.

[7] Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 6; L.G. Thomas, The Liberal Party in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), p. 65.

immigrating to Canada.[8]

Later, Oliver voiced cultural and economic concerns over Oriental immigration to Canada. It had always been his desire to protect Canadian labour from the ravages of immigration.[9] He denounced Government policy regarding Oriental labour in British Columbia. Based on the Vancouver Health Inspector's report that Orientals lived in unsanitary, disease-ridden, and immoral quarters, Oliver stated:

> it is said you cannot get white labour in British Columbia, but how can you expect to get it when you put it in competition with labour under conditions that it cannot compete with, that you would not want it to compete with, and that it would not be white labour if it did compete with.

On the basis of the Health Inspector's report Oliver came to the conclusion that to compete with Orientals, whites "would have to sleep and eat and live as pigs." In his opinion even the Orientals' presence in Canadian industry was undesirable because they displaced eastern Canadians and other British immigrants, causing them to

> go to the United States and look for opportunities there, [rather] than [to] give their mental vigor, education and physical strength -- which is second to none in the world -- to developing our own province of British Columbia and building up our own country for our own

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[8] House of Commons Debates, col. 8205, 25-6-00.

[9] House of Commons Debates, col. 3123, 16-5-04.

benefit as well as theirs.[10]

Oliver's concern was based less on the colour of these people than on their alleged cultural attributes, and effects on Canadian life. As a threat both culturally and economically Oliver saw them as undesirable.

Though he commented little on Oriental immigration over the next few years, Oliver's views on the subject were no doubt well known by 1908 when he introduced Bill 184, "to amend the Chinese Immigration Act." Key clauses of the Bill fell under the jurisdiction of the Departments of Customs, and Trade and Commerce, but Oliver was probably chosen to guide the Bill through Parliament because its overall concern was immigration.[11] In fact on occasion Oliver introduced amendments at the requests of the Ministers of these Departments, particularly amendments regarding the head tax.[12] The Bill was designed to amend what were considered to be a number of defects in the Chinese Immigration Act. It proposed that only minor

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[10] The above quotes are from Ibid., cols. 8206, 8200, 25-6-00.

[11] The Bill was introduced on 8-6-06. Regulations concerning the head tax, including definitions and payment, were established by the Department of Trade and Commerce, and administered by the Department of Customs, while the illegal transportation of Chinese was also a matter for the Department of Trade and Commerce. See House of Commons Debates, col. 10547, 15-6-08, and cols. 10744, 10745, 17-6-08.

[12] Ibid., cols. 10751, 10752, 17-6-08.

children, those under twenty-one years, of Chinese merchants were to be exempt from paying a head tax, and that those who entered Canada illegally, without paying the head tax, would be subject to fines and deportation. Without the former amendment, Chinese immigrants had been abusing the system and entering Canada illegally, while there was no way to deport them once they were in country.[13]

This was the primary flaw of the Chinese Immigration Act. While the intent of Section 2 was to limit the head tax exemption to Chinese children under twenty-one years, such was not explicitly stated. As well, there was no limit on the age of students, and Chinese immigrants were falsly entering Canada on that basis. Oliver, at the request of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, proposed to set that limit at seventeen years. While there was some objection to placing a limit on the age after which one could no longer be considered a student, Oliver defended the proposal by stating that, as he understood it, abuses to the system -- which he never outlined, and perhaps were not his concern -- were the causes of the privilege being withdrawn.[14] Although there was debate over where the head tax should be collected (at the port of entry, port of departure, or immigration centres), by whom, and to which

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[13] Ibid., col. 10545, 15-6-08.

[14] Ibid., col. 10546, 15-6-08.

level of Government it was to be paid (federal or provincial), Oliver's only comment on the matter was that the subject of the discussion did not fall under the jurisdiction of his Department. Oliver remained silent throughout much of the debate. Regardless, there was no objection to the principle of the head tax in the debates, though it was not the subject of the amendments.

However, Oliver's immigration philosophy did emerge within the debates. The method of resolving the central problem of the original Act -- that of the age and requirements of Chinese students -- was an amendment which allowed those seeking higher training to come to Canada for a one-year period. Therefore, alleged students had to prove they were students in China before they were admitted into Canada, a radically different policy than the one previously employed.[15] This was Oliver's idea and reflects the general trend of his immigration policy, as aliens of all backgrounds had to prove their value before admittance to Canada. Given the fact that debate over the Bill was minimal, and rarely centred on the principles employed guiding Chinese immigration, and that silent unanimity was all that greeted the proposed stronger penalties for illegal Chinese immigrants, one can only conclude that the Members of Parliament felt they were dealing with an obvious problem that needed quick and

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[15] Ibid., cols. 11020, 11021, 22-6-08.

strong fixing.[16]

Japanese and Hindu immigration presented much more awkward situations than Chinese immigration. Britain had signed a treaty with Japan which, among other things, guaranteed Japanese in Canada equal treatment with other Canadian citizens. This British-Japanese relationship effectively circumscribed Canada's ability to limit Japanese immigration with measures similar to those she had used to deal with the Chinese, such as a head tax. In any case, Japan was a world power and presented economic possibilities in which Canada desired to share.[17] India, a country of the Empire, was the homeland of Hindus. Many of them had fought for the British Crown in past battles. To limit their entrance with a head tax would not only be insulting to them, but would also put into question the whole notion of the Empire, as countries in it were to be brothers and sisters. Despite these realities, Oliver was pressured to do something about these two groups as their numbers began to dramatically increase after he became Minister. Until 1903-04, there were no reports of Hindu immigration to Canada, and only negligible numbers of Japanese. In 1907-08, 2,623 Hindus and 7,601 Japanese immigrated. These numbers had not only increased yearly in

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[16] Subsequent penalties were deportation, imprisonment for a maximum of twelve months, and fines not to exceed $500. Ibid., col. 10751, 17-6-08.

[17] Edmonton Bulletin, 21-8-07.

the previous four years, but their increase appeared to have no end in sight.[18] As with many immigrant groups they were very visible, and tended to stay together once in Canada, and as with the Chinese, the greatest congregations of both were to be found in British Columbia.

Census and immigration figures paint an interesting picture. From 1904-05 to 1910-11 24,884 Hindus were reported to have immigrated to Canada, yet the 1911 census indicated that only 2,342 lived in Canada. Corresponding numbers are not so dramatic for the Japanese, as in the same seven years 11,919 immigrated to Canada, while in 1911, 9,021 lived in Canada.[19] Most of those immigrants were no doubt used for railway construction or in primary resource industries. It is possible that conditions in those camps were so deplorable that immigrants worked there for a year or two, accumulated some money, and instead of settling in Canada returned to their homeland. This could account for the discrepancy between the numbers that immigrated to Canada and the number actually living in the country.[20] This was the traditional

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[18] Immigration Facts and Figures (Ottawa: Department of the Interior, 1917), p. 6.

[19] Ibid., pps. 6, 7; Fifth Census of Canada, 1911, pps. 370, 371.

[20] It is also possible that significant numbers in the work camps were simply not counted.

economic/immigration criticism of the period: while Canada wanted citizens, these people were merely transient labourers, in Canada to make fast money, only to depart just as fast. To contemporary Canadians their contribution to the building of Canada was, when not overlooked, perceived as unimportant. And because of their willingness to work for less, in less desirable conditions, these immigrants were simply seen as displacing Canadian labourers.

The Government took a number of steps in its attempt to halt this immigration. Through the efforts of the Department of Labour, a "gentleman's agreement" with Japan was reached, by which Japan voluntarily agreed to limit the number of her citizens immigrating to Canada.[21] It was found, however, that a large number of Japanese and Hindus were not coming directly from their homeland, which in great part rendered the Japanese-Canadian agreement ineffective. An increasing number of Japanese were coming from the Sandwich Isles (Hawaii), an American dependency, while significant numbers of Hindus were coming from Hong Kong, a British dependency. Japanese from the Sandwich Isles were free from the constraints of official Japanese action, and the Canadian Government had no alternative but to let them stay once they landed in Canada. Because they had not come from Japan, she need not take the immigrants

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[21] Sessional Papers, 1909, no. 36, p. 11.

back. They were not Americans, so the United States could also refuse to accept them. In Oliver's opinion this situation was a game of numbers. He believed that if these immigrants were simply looking for employment, there should be no problem as opportunities abounded in British Columbia. However, he also believed that "very many people are of the opinion that it is a concerted movement emanating from Japan itself, the end of which no one can forsee."[22] The relative populations of Canada and Japan caused xenophobia and ethnocentrism to run at fevered pitches. Japan lost the numbers game, and Oliver, feeling he must respond to the national mood, introduced an amendment to the Immigration Act to address the situation.

In January, 1908, Oliver first gave notice of his proposed amendment. He explained that usually the steamship company which transported immigrants deemed undesirable was responsible for his return voyage. However, if the immigrant was not a citizen of the country from which he departed, such as were the cases with Japanese from the Sandwich Isles, and Hindus from Hong Kong, the country from which the immigrant departed did not have to accept the him. Given this predicament, the steamship company could not be forced to return the immigrant.[23] The Government had been enforcing a

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[22] Edmonton Bulletin, 21-8-07.

[23] House of Commons Debates, col. 6429, 8-4-08.

regulation which forbade any immigrant from coming to Canada unless he came directly from his country of citizenship, or by means of a through-ticket purchased there. This had effectively solved both the Japanese and Hindu situations. However, the transportation companies had taken legal action against the regulation, and the courts of British Columbia set it aside as not being in proper form.[24] While the Government passed an order in council conforming the regulation to the court's ruling, Oliver proposed that because "this question is of such importance in the administration of our immigration law," the regulation become part of the Act.[25]

Debate over this amendment was minimal. There was some concern that the Government was singling out Hindus for exclusion, but Oliver responded to those criticisms by stating that the amendment was meant to apply to all intending immigrants, good or bad. Oliver argued that

> we want to be in position to protect ourselves against the man who will not be a good citizen of the country - not necessarily because of any inherent defect in himself, but because of conditions which may exist, and which do not admit of his being able to make

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[24] The reason the court gave "was that while the Governor in Council had the right to exclude, he had not the right to delegate that power to the Minister of the Interior as had been done by the terms of the regulation; therefore the regulation was declared to be of non-effect and these people [Hindus from Hong Kong] had to be permitted to land." Ibid., col. 6430, 8-4-04.

[25] Ibid., col. 6430, 8-4-08.

a living in Canada.[26]

While he did not specifically detail any conditions that might render an immigrant unable to contribute to Canadian society, one might infer that he was referring to economic or cultural ones. There was some concern that Canada was attempting to exclude British subjects, including those who had fought for Britain.[27] Perhaps because of their political explosiveness and divisive nature -- the criteria for an immigrant's desirability transcended party lines -- these arguments went unchallenged. The amendment was quickly passed.

Apparently the Asian situation was still not satisfactorily resolved because on June 3, 1908, it was the subject of an order in council. Allowed under Section 20 of the Immigration Act, it set possession of $200 as one pre-condition of an Asian immigrant's admission into Canada. A ticket to their Canadian destination, which most immigrants were required to possess, was also mandatory.[28] This suggests that the Government was deeply concerned with Asian immigration, as the new order in council was more strict than the regulation guiding most other immigrants, who were required to have only $50.

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[26] Ibid., col. 6434, 8-4-08.

[27] These concerns were raised by Sam Hughes and J.G. Haggart. Ibid., cols. 6438, 6439, 8-4-08.

[28] The Canada Gazette, 1908, p. clxii.

The action was possibly taken because of reports of the Canadian Nippon Supply Company which had surfaced earlier in the year. The Company had connections with Japanese immigration agencies and was designed to illegally supply large numbers of Asian immigrants at low wages to the Canadian Pacific Railway.[29] This further fanned the flames of economic and cultural criticisms of the Government's immigration policy. As well, xenophobia increased with the knowledge that Canadian industry was illicitly importing large numbers of undesirable immigrants to Canada. Immigration statistics for 1907-08 showed that Japanese immigration was at a pre-World War I peak of 7,601.[30] It was to fall dramatically in 1908-09 to 495 when the order in council and the new amendment in the Immigration Act came into effect, and the Japanese Government finally took action to control its emigration. As well, Chinese immigration was stemmed, being 1,884 in 1907-08 and 1,887 in the next year. Hindu immigration continued to increase, rising from 2,623 in 1907-08 to 4,228 in 1908-09, and higher in the following years. This

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[29] The Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux's Royal Commission report on the subject of Japanese labour in Canada stated that in June, 1907, the C.P.R. and the Canadian Nippon Supply Company entered into an agreement -- not their first -- in which the C.P.R. was promised from 500 to 2,000 labourers a year at wages ranging from $1.35 to $1.65 a day. Sessional Papers, 1909, no. 36, p. 111.

[30] The following statistics are from Immigration Facts and Figures, pps. 6, 7.

would suggest that if an immigrant met all the requirements of the Immigration Act he was going to be permitted to enter into Canada.

Despite fundamental changes in the nature of immigration policy in the years since Oliver had become Minister, by 1909 he was still not content with it. To remedy some of the problems and flaws of the Immigration Act, on January 28, 1909, Oliver introduced Bill 17, "to amend and revise the Immigration Act." As he stated, the Bill "differ[ed] in detail rather than in principle" from the Act of 1906. Oliver believed that the 1906 Act went far in promoting selective immigration, but that "since then circumstances have arisen which make it necessary to follow a policy of more restriction or more and more careful selection."[31] Those circumstances centred around court actions filed against the Act, assisted immigration, and generally excesses of undesirable immigrants. The revised Act was designed to meet and remedy these problems.

That there were problems with the 1906 Immigration Act was evident in the immigration statistics. From 1904-05 to 1908-09, the number of recent immigrants deported from Canada continued to rise, from 86 in the former year to 1,748 in the latter. British immigrants were always at

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[31] House of Commons Debates, col. 240, 28-1-09; Ibid., col. 2010, 4-3-09.

the top of this list, composing 73% of those rejected in the three years.[32] It is interesting to compare the number of deportations with the numbers rejected at the ocean ports. Though rejections, in numbers, were much more erratic in the period 1904-05 to 1908-09, and indeed increased significantly in the years following (1909-1911) the percentages are more comparable. Those from countries outside Britain and the United States accounted for 83% of those rejected.[33] This suggests that while British immigrants might have gained easier entry through Canada's gates -- a political necessity, if nothing else -- they were perhaps subject to greater observation once in Canada, neither their birthplace nor culture a guarantee of their being allowed to remain in Canada.

The second problem, that of bonused immigration, had long been a contentious issue. From 1904-05 to 1908-09, 16.7% of British immigrants and 12.5% of Continental immigrants were designated as assisted.[34] These numbers,

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[32] In total, there were 2,997 immigrants deported in the period. Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 17.

[33] In total there were 3,256 immigrants rejected in the period. Ibid., p. 13.

[34] Unfortuately there are no statistics -- at least the author could not find them -- which correlated assisted immigration and rejections or deportations. Regarding bonused Continental immigration, it fell from 31.8% in 1904-05 to 3.5% in 1906-07, and was not to rise above 5% in Oliver's years as Minister. While assisted immigration and bonused immigration were not necessarily the same, the funds for assisted immigration appear to have been tabulated with bonused immigration, and the

from the debate and criticism which they generated, were considered by many to be much in excess of what was deemed desirable. The grievances of those who opposed the policy were based on what they considered the questionable value of paying immigrants to come to Canada. The third problem to which Oliver referred, court cases, usually resulted from actions taken by transportation companies. Such cases were a constant thorn in Oliver's side, often requiring orders in council, Government regulations, or amendments to the Immigration Act to remove.[35] It was Oliver's desire to reframe the Act to remove all the questionable areas, thereby letting the Government and not the courts decide Canada's immigration policy.

The general reception of Oliver's Bill was positive. Typical were the comments of F.D. Monk, the Conservative Member of Parliament for Jacques Cartier. He congratulated Oliver, stating "I have no hesitation in saying that it is a step forward upon the lines which have very often been advocated in this House...." Eugene Paquet, Conservative Member of Parliament for L'Islet, added that though the Bill "is not perfect...it is certainly a progressive

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Opposition usually treated them as one. Ibid., p. 18.

[35] Though the exact number of court cases could not be found, the previously cited case of Asians coming indirectly to Canada is a prime example.

measure and makes for social peace."[36] Significantly, these men were two of Oliver's most vocal immigration critics. However, despite the Bill's apparent acceptable amendments, it was subjected to many delays in the House, and in the end was not passed before the 1909 summer adjournment.

In dealing with the Bill, the House went into committee three times during March, April and May, the final time on May 10, nearly four months after its introduction.[37] The Bill was still in committee when, much to Oliver's chagrin, Parliament was adjourned. The Opposition berated Oliver for leaving such a large Bill till so late in the session, and blamed him for its failing to pass. Oliver reminded the Opposition that the Bill was the first one on the order papers.[38] In the end it was the disappointment expressed by many that reflected the Bill's overall desirability. As it died, Monk stated that it was his belief that Conservatives in general supported the Bill. Monk's closing lamentation was indicative of the changing nature of immigration policy. "It is a Bill to improve the conditions which, up to two or three years ago, were absolutely intolerable. The

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[36] House of Common Debates, cols. 2010, 2011, 4-3-09; Ibid., col. 6129, 10-5-09.

[37] Ibid., cols. 4413, 4414, 16-4-09; col. 6129, 10-5-09.

[38] Ibid., col. 6181, 10-5-09.

Minister himself, I think, desired to see that Bill passed, as we all did, with certain amendments."[39]

Despite being displeased about the Bill's death, Oliver was quite pleased with the direction immigration policy was taking. In his opinion, which was shared by others, there had been key changes in policy from 1906, when Oliver's efforts were at first stymied by events beyond his control, to 1909. The tide of immigration was strong in 1905. However, with it was carried the flotsam and jetsam common to such a phenomenon. In those four years Oliver had constructed a selective strainer to catch and separate this element. As well, publicity efforts were limited to the United States, and abroad to Great Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Iceland and Scandinavia, and concentrated on those who could occupy or work on the land in Canada, while those who might add to the congestion of the cities or were culturally unacceptable were avoided. This made it possible for him to argue that immigration policy had become more selective.[40] However, it was Oliver's desire

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[39] Some of the key amendments discussed, were the definiton of an immigrant, the procedure for medical inspection, and assisted immigration. The most significant delay was caused by the Conservatives' desire to wait until they had compiled further information on the subject of immigration. Ibid., cols. 7010, 7004, 18-5-09.

[40] During Oliver's administration, 41.8% of all immigrants claimed to be agriculturalists. As well, 34.8% of all British emigrants came to Canada. In the last two years of Sifton's administration (prior to 1903-04 a

to constrict the holes of the strainer still more, and though he failed in 1909, he was to try again in 1910.[41]

In the summer of 1909, however, Oliver was busy in Great Britain, once again reviewing immigration efforts. He was quite content with the Canadian information disseminated there, and the efforts of agents and farmer delegates. He believed that Canada was enjoying a more favourable reputation in Britain than she had up to that point. He gave notice in the Bulletin before his departure that Canada would continue her active immigration practices, while at the same time protecting the country against assisted immigration, and those immigrants British magistrates sent to Canada to be rehabilitated by introducing some measures in Parliament. Anticipating some criticism on this point, Oliver added, "the restrictions stand against all-comers [sic] from whatever land."[42] It was Oliver's opinion that a still tighter immigration policy was the only way to protect Canada from the ravages of undesirable immigrants -- be their undesirability a result of cultural, economic, physical or moral reasons.

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different system of tabulation was used) 37.6% of the immigrants were agriculturalists. From 1896 to 1904 16.3% of all British emigrants came to Canada. Immigration Facts and Figures. See Appendix, Tables 5 and 6.

[41] Edmonton Bulletin, 17-6-09.

[42] As Oliver expected, some British claimed -- as happened before -- that Canada no longer desired British immigrants. Oliver denied those accusations. Edmonton Bulletin, 21-8-09; 25-6-09.

Given Parliamentary support and public calls for a more restrictive and selective policy, it was not surprising that Oliver introduced another Bill in the following session of Parliament. This was his swan song. Over a quarter of a century of honing his debating skills were evident in his witty, forceful and succinct arguments. On January 19, 1910, Oliver introduced Bill 102 and stated that it was necessary because of changes which had occured since 1906. Once again, the principles of the 1906 Act were not to be altered, but rather, as the Bulletin noted, Bill 102 consolidated and amended the existing immigration laws, expanding on the principles of exclusion and restriction. The Bulletin continued in its argument that the increasingly large numbers of immigrants meant a corresponding increase in the number of undesirable immigrants. Provisions restricting those undesirables had to be put into place. The Bill

> provid[ed] the basis and machinery for carrying on the second half of the immigration work. The first problem [was] to attract the desirable people to the country; the second to weed out and send back the undesirable who join the procession. A vigorous policy had been followed along both these lines. That more stringent measures are found necessary and advisable for the weeding out process is another proof that the effort to get settlers has been successful, and a sign that it is confidently expected to be equally successful in the future.[43]

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[43] Ibid., 7-2-10.

Oliver saw the Bill as protecting Canada in the future as well as in the present.

In Parliament, Oliver stated that the policies of selection and restriction were to be more rigorously enforced along the Canadian-American border, and with prospective Asiatic immigrants. It was believed that too many undesirables were gaining admittance via these avenues.[44] Although the 1906 Act had established a board of inquiry to sit in judgement of rejected immigrant's cases, the Act did not set forth any machinery to establish the board and guide it through the process. Bill 102 outlined its proposed structure. An important new clause, admitted by Oliver to be radical, proposed that until an immigrant was actually admitted into Canada he was not entitled to the protection of the Canadian courts. Oliver concluded that, for all intents and purposes, the Bill was the same as the one introduced the previous year.[45]

Oliver stated that his desire in presenting the Bill

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[44] Up to 1911-12 there were 649 Americans deported. For all other countries combined (save Great Britain) to 1911-12 there were 1,131 deported. Rejection statistics of immigrants from the United States were not tabulated until 1909. In that year 4,580 were rejected, in 1910 - 8,997, and in 1911 - 15,404. The cause of rejection was most often financial (lack of funds or likelihood of becoming a public charge). Rejections of those from countries outside America or Britain were, for 1908-09 - 361, 1909-10- 1,319, 1910-11 - 1,957, and 1911-12 - 743. Immigration Facts and Figures, pps. 13, 14, 17.

[45] House of Commons Debates, cols. 2133, 2134, 19-1-10.

was to clearly define what the immigration policy of the Government was so that all would be able to understand it. The basis of the policy, and his personal beliefs, became obvious on a number of occasions during the debates.[46] At one point he argued that the policy of the Government was to treat all immigrants "on exactly the same footing, on the same basis, according to their merits, irrespective of their race or religion."[47] He later added that

> it is, and always has been, the policy of the Immigration Department, so far as my knowledge of it is concerned, to deal fairly and equitably with all men...there is no ban put upon a man by the Immigration Department because of his nationality, but...there is a preference shown, and properly shown, to the people of our own race.[48]

Though the country needed labourers, Oliver believed that it more importantly required citizens, and that to get

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[46] It is sometimes difficult to tell whether Oliver's personal beliefs were the same as the ones he publicly expressed. Mackenzie King wrote in his diary on 10-1-11: "This morning [in cabinet] was taken up with affairs of the Interior Department. Oliver is strong in his opposition to labour being brought into the country for work on Railways that ultimately is not going to be of service for settlement, and favours making restrictions on virtually all save northern people of Europe. I agree with him, but we are alone in this, others preferring to see Railway work hurried." Given that he had little reason to hide his beliefs in cabinet, it is evident that Oliver's public views were basically the same as his private ones. William Lyon Mackenzie King, The Mackenzie King Diaries, 1893-1931 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. G2286, p. 1.

[47] House of Commons Debates, col. 5505, 14-3-10.

[48] Ibid., col. 5850, 22-3-10.

these, the Government naturally sought people "of our own race." Such a set of beliefs does not necessarily imply racism. It does not even show that Oliver believed the British to be superior, although he no doubt did. It only demonstrates that Oliver desired more of the same people that had created such a society as existed in Canada, a society he quite ethnocentrically believed to be unparalleled.

During the lengthy debate on the Bill many Members of Parliament felt obliged to give their opinion on immigration matters. F.D. Monk, usually the Conservative immigration critic, did reflect some of the more standard concerns of his party. He suggested that, given Canada's growing world recognition, the time was past when she needed immigration agents in the United States or Britain, especially when so many of them were political nominees. He offered the United States as an example that such a system could work, as their immigration policy did not actively solicit immigrants, employed a head tax, and yet the country still received over a million prospective citizens a year. Monk believed the proposed inspection system to be a necessary addition. He expressed his regrets that the improved Bill had not been passed earlier. Reflective of Oliver's opinions, he concluded that "I shall never be satisfied...until we advance a step further - until we consider that the admission of an

immigrant into this country is not a goal to be sought for at all costs."[49]

In the ensuing debates the Government was criticized on a broad range of issues. Many of these had nothing to do with the provisions of Bill 102, and often centred on past policy performance. It was claimed that there were still significant numbers of Canadians leaving for the United States. However, Oliver contended that Canadian emigration was not a primary concern of the Immigration Department. Maritime Canadian Members of Parliament were angry over the fact that Government policy directed immigrants to central or western Canada while virtually excluding the east coast.[50] It was suggested that immigration officials need be more carefully selected; otherwise the standards of immigration were at risk. A common criticism, though less heard in the months prior to 1910, was that a more intense medical examination need be implemented, preferably at the port of departure from Europe. This would further protect Canada, and save prospective immigrants from considerable hardship. However, Opposition opinion on the Bill was split, as was evident in the comments of Robert Borden, the Conservative

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[49] Ibid., cols. 5506, 5507, 5511, 14-3-10.

[50] From 1905 to 1911 the Maritime provinces received 57,776 immigrants. This was 4.1% of the total immigration of the period. Immigration to the Maritimes did increase in the latter years of Oliver's administration. Immigration Facts and Figures, pps. 2, 4.

leader. He had little criticism of the Bill, and, like Oliver, did not see it as a radical departure from the previous Act. Insofar as the Bill facilitated greater restriction and more careful selection, Borden supported its passage.[51]

Actual debate on the Bill did not begin until March 21. As most amendments dealt with tighter restrictions, debates were short. The nation's mood dictated just such restrictions. One subject that engendered a little more spirited debate was assisted immigration. Oliver suggested that the legal definiton -- all who received money in aid of their passage were assisted immigrants -- was too restrictive, and proposed that assisted immigration include only those immigrants given money by charitable agencies. This change was a necessity because of the pressure of Members of Parliament complaining that those immigrants aided by Canadians, be they friends or prospective employers, had every right to come to Canada and were certainly not in the same class as charity-aided immigrants. As Adam B. Crosby, Conservative Member of Parliament for Halifax put it: "When a man is of good character, and shows he should not be deported, and has friends, as sometimes happens, who are prepared to help him there should be some way of preventing his being

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51 House of Commons Debates, cols. 5512, 5513, 5516, 5522, 5523, 14-3-10.

deported as an undesirable immigrant."[52]

Oliver sympathized with this view, but made it clear that some sort of restriction against assisted immigration was necessary, if only to prevent a repetition of the situation of 1907, when many of the cases of the depression-induced distress across Canada were charity-aided immigrants. Indeed, it had become the Government's policy to "assume that a charity-aided immigrant is an undesirable immigrant...the burden of proof of the contrary [being upon the immigrant]."[53] It was also policy to inspect all such immigrants before they departed for Canada. The fact that most of these aided immigrants came from Britain suggests that simply being British was increasingly becoming an insufficient reason to be permitted entry to Canada.

Oliver defended his amendments with arguments similar to those he had voiced so many times since 1906. From his experience, he had come to realize that the difficulties in enforcing an exclusionist Immigration Act were many. "[Therefore] these [amendments] must be strong if they are to have any value at all...."[54] Demonstrating his desire to construct the best possible Act, Oliver borrowed liberally from the Immigration Acts of other nations,

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[52] Ibid., cols. 5803, 5804, 21-3-10.

[53] Ibid., cols. 5805, 5807, 21-3-10.

[54] Ibid., col. 5815, 21-3-10.

including Australia and the United States.[55] And although his desire was primarily to protect Canadian interests, he noted that the purpose of the board of inquiry was to give the immigrant a fair trial by replacing the previously employed arbitrary ruling of the Immigration Department. Such boards were to be established at the major ports of entry on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Of course, the final appeal would be to the Minister of the Interior. There was little debate over this scheme.[56]

Section 28, however, raised considerable discussion. It concerned the physical and mental inspection of immigrants. The Opposition argued that because immigrants arrived in Canada before their inspection, undesirable immigrants escaped detection until they were in the country, thereby placing an undue financial burden on the nation, as well as putting it at risk. It was therefore desirable to have the inspection at the immigrant's port of embarkation. Oliver felt that although such a plan might be desirable, the monetary costs rendered it prohibitive. Uriah Wilson, the Conservative Member of Parliament for Lennox and Addington (Ontario), recommended that the Government could fund this aspect of the policy by doing away with bonuses, a suggestion which turned the

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[55] Section 4 was from the Australian Immigration Act, while Section 12 was taken directly from the American Act. Ibid., cols. 5815, 5816, 21-3-10.

[56] Ibid., cols. 5816, 5817, 21-3-10.

discussion in a new direction. Oliver remained firm in the face of the anti-bonus onslaught, and repeated that insofar as assisted immigration was defined as money given to an immigrant by the Government to aid his passage, it was not Government policy. Though badgered, he commented no more on the issue.[57]

To suggestions that the steamships' medical officers perform the Government's examinations, Oliver responded that it was a task with which only individuals directly responsible to the Government could be entrusted.[58] A more interesting angle was taken by Eugene Paquet, the Conservative Member of Parliament for L'Islet. For Paquet, this section of the Bill was its most important, and he desired to see it strengthened by having some sort of moral inspection incorporated into it. Oliver was sympathetic to such a suggestion, but he noted that the necessary criminal documentation was not available on immigrants from Great Britain, and that although it was for Europe, he believed it would unduly hamper immigration efforts there. In any case, Oliver was quite sure that the deportation provisions in the Bill would be a sufficient safeguard for attacks on Canadian morality.[59]

The proposed Section 38 (c), which dealt with the

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[57] Ibid., cols. 5830, 5834, 22-3-10.

[58] Ibid., cols. 5822, 5823, 5825, 22-10-3.

[59] Ibid., cols. 5823, 5825, 22-3-10.

prohibition of races to be specified when the occasion required it, was seen by Oliver as one of the most important clauses in the 1910 Bill. It was a clause which firmly extended the principles of selection and restriction, and broad Government powers that Oliver had been fostering. He warned Parliament:

> I would wish that every Member of the House should appreciate the full measure of his responsibility in endorsing the drastic exclusion provisions of this immigration law; he must share with the Government the hardship which occurs under it. It would not be acting fairly with the country, and the Government would stand to be condemned, if having been authorized by Parliament to enforce certain exclusion proivisions, the Government did not give effect to those provisions.[60]

Certainly Oliver was giving ample warning that the clause would be used if necessary. Furthermore, its use was to be justified as being the wish of Canada, and not on the whim of the Minister of the Interior or the Government. Although Oliver never specified any group against which the clause was directed, an Opposition Member of Parliament suggested that it was the Japanese. However, by 1910 the Japanese no longer posed the threat that they were once perceived as posing. Oliver claimed he had no race in mind, and defended the clause with the hypothetical case of "a sudden influx of people from some

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[60] Ibid., cols. 5860, 5861, 22-3-10.

undesirable Asiatic or African country [presenting a situation the Government could handle] without ceremony, [by] simply say[ing]: You cannot land."[61] There was virtually no parliamentary opposition to the measure. The national mood continued to be in favour of more careful selection and greater restriction.

Following two full days of debate, on March 23, the Bill was read the third time and passed. The fact that only two days of debate were necessary demonstrates that once again Oliver had his finger on the nation's pulse. The Bill was returned from the Senate on April 29, and was quickly passed thereafter.[62] The Liberal Toronto Globe was pleased to note the greater restrictions, especially regarding the mentally and physically unfit. The paper congratulated Oliver on a Bill designed "to meet the demands of the increasing volume of immigration." The Globe deemed this as especially important, given the increasing number of what it termed "defectives" being unloaded on Canada by foreign countries and the resulting burden then placed on Canada. The Globe was for any amendments that might diminish that burden.[63] There was some criticism centring around what was seen as the

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[61] The suggestion that the clause was directed against the Japanese was made by Conservative Uriah Wilson. Ibid., col. 5853, 22-3-10.

[62] Ibid., cols. 8400, 8401, 29-4-10.

[63] Toronto Globe, 21-1-10.

worsened plight of the immigrant that the Act had created. The Conservative Montreal Gazette berated Oliver for making it harder for immigrants to get into Canada, especially when the process involved the separation of families.[64] Otherwise the Bill passed with little public fanfare as registered in the country's newspapers.[65]

Oliver was faced with one more major difficulty before the Liberals were voted out of office in late 1911.[66] In March and April, 1911, there was a concentrated immigration of a few hundred black Americans. More disconcerting to many were the rumors of more to follow in their footsteps. The previous year had seen similar movements to both Saskatchewan and Alberta. By 1911 a significant number of them were settling in northern Alberta. Confusion reigned as reports of Government action to prohibit the black immigrants' entrance contradicted official denials of any such efforts.[67] Attempting to escape the problems of the American South, these immigrants were coming to Canada in community groups with

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[64] Montreal Gazette, 24-3-10.

[65] It is well to note that the subject of reciprocity with the United States was beginning to dominate the press at this time.

[66] An Act amending the Immigration Act of 1910 was assented to on April 4, 1911. Only six sections of the 1910 Act were affected. The changes were minor and debate was minimal.

[67] Edmonton Bulletin, 21-3-11, 22-3-11, 23-3-11, 25-3-11.

the desire to maintain their communities once in Canada. They were not typical American immigrants as they possessed little money. However, many of those from northern Alberta worked in Edmonton during the winter to supplement their income. They appeared especially anxious to have their children assimilated, and established their own schools to accomplish it.[68] Trained as farmers, industrious and eager to be Canadianized, in many ways black Americans were the ideal immigrants.

From 1904-05 to 1909-10 black immigration had risen from five to 3,372 (the highest number before the First World War).[69] However, as was the case with some of the Oriental races, it was not necessarily the actual number of immigrants that mattered to Canadians, but the concentration of those immigrants once in Canada. As they settled in blocks, the fears spread that many more might follow in a pattern of chain migration as some Canadians began to exhibit symptoms of xenophobia. Whatever the basis of this xenophobia -- and many reasons were to be eventually rationalized -- people feared the increasing immigration of blacks and began to strike back, calling for restrictions. Given that two of the black settlements were close to Edmonton (Wildwood, 75 miles west and Amber

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[68] Robin Winks, The Blacks in Canada (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University press, 1971), pps. 305, 306.

[69] Immigration Facts and Figures, pps. 6, 7.

Valley, 100 miles north), Oliver especially felt such pressures. It was cause for anxiety when he began receiving letters and petitions stating that his beloved Edmonton was in deep trouble.

It appeared that Oliver, like so many Edmontonians, believed the influx of blacks into the region to be of grave consequence. When, in April, 1911, Oliver received a resolution adopted by both Edmonton's Municipal Council, and Board of Trade, he replied by telling the groups that "the matter is receiving the serious consideration of the Government."[70] The resolution stated the the fear that black immigration "if unchecked, promises in the near future to have a disastrous influence upon the welfare and development of this fair Province." It was believed that black immigrants were deterring the more desirable white settlers from coming into the surrounding area, and that their increased numbers would only continue to do so. Stated in those terms it appears the motive behind the call for their restriction was racist. It is necessary to keep in mind, however, that white American immigrants brought more money and shared similar historical and cultural backgrounds. It was also believed that black immigration would lead to conflicts among the blacks and

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[70] The Prime Minister also received copies of the resolution. The resolution and petition are to be found in City of Edmonton Archives, Frank Oliver File, M.S. 209, file 154.

whites as "have arisen in the United States and wherever the two races have come into contact." Most interesting was the cover letter sent by the Mayor of Edmonton, George Armstrong, which declared, in a very racist tone: "It will be noticed that the matter is not approached in any spirit of race prejudice and that nothing is put forward as to the undesirability of the negro settlers who are coming, apart from their color."

This comment raises a certain problem: did Edmcntonians know that their actions were in great part racially motivated or did they not? It would appear that they believed they were only trying to protect their interests, and that they honestly believed that by restricting black immigration they were helping both races. A petition circulated in the city was much more forward as it stated that the key point was not whether these immigrants were good farmers or good citizens. What mattered was that American society had demonstrated that whites and blacks could not peacefully coexist. The petition also blamed the interaction between blacks and whites for American lawlessness, even in areas where there were no blacks.[71] It was obvious that many Edmontonians surmised that blacks were responsible for numerous ills of American society. They therefore rationalized that to have

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[71] There is no indication of how many signed the petition, circulated on 18-4-11.

them in Canada would put their country at similar jeopardy, a chance which could not be taken. The restriction of black Americans then was rationalized as a social, and not a racial, issue.

Though the citizens of Edmonton appeared to be united in their desire to have Oliver bring in legislation to deal with black American immigration, Parliament was much more divided on the issue. While some called for the restriction of black immigrants, others demanded to know if the Government had indeed done anything to prohibit or inhibit the immigration of such fine settlers.[72] The issue raised little notice in the press, suggesting it was not of major concern to most Canadians. However, Oliver contended that "there is a very strong sentiment in this country against the admission of negroes."[73] In spite of this he made it clear that the Government would not take the initiative to enact any laws unless instructed to do so by Parliament, and would therefore rely solely on existing legislation to deal with the situation. He denied

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[72] For differing opinions in Parliament, see House of Commons Debates, col. 5911, 22-3-11; col. 5947, 23-3-11 (Members representing South Essex, and Halifax [Robert Borden]. Both were Conservatives and pro-black immigration); and cols. 6523, 6525, 3-4-11 (Members representing West Lanark and North Toronto [George Foster]. Both were Conservatives and anti-black immigration). It appears that most Members of Parliament who voiced an opinion considered blacks to be good immigrants.

[73] House of Commons Debates, col. 5496, 23-3-11.

any Government action either helping or hindering black immigrants.[74] He firmly stated that "these people will not be kept out because of their color and they will not be admitted because of their color if they are otherwise undesirable...The conditions [of undesirability] are described in the statute and regulations."[75] These were, as far as the law was concerned, immigrants like any other.

It was apparent through the Edmonton Bulletin, that Oliver was personally not too keen on black immigration. The Bulletin reflected many of the concerns voiced in the Edmonton region. The paper claimed that the black immigrant's undesirability was neither due to his colour, nor to the competition he would provide to the white man. Restriction of black immigration was a defensive action, designed to prevent the creation of conditions in Canada similar to those existing in the United States. That the blacks were not singly responsible for the creation of those conditions was not the issue. The Bulletin argued that the possibility such conditions could be created in Canada was reason enough to draw a colour line at the boundary.[76] Given the differences between Canada and the United States that the Bulletin often pointed to, the

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[74] Ibid., cols. 5495, 5496, 23-3-11.

[75] Ibid., col. 5912, 5913, 22-3-11.

[76] Edmonton Bulletin, 30-5-11.

belief that the interaction of blacks and whites in Canada would bring the same results as it had brought in the United States was indeed a strange conclusion to reach.

Given this sentiment, it was not surprising that Oliver did attempt to establish a colour line. He had medical officers attempt to find a just medical reason to have black American immigrants rejected.[77] The Ottawa press reported Oliver's desire to impose a $500 head tax on black immigrants, though in Parliament he denied any intention to do so, bluntly stating "...there are no instructions offered by the Immigration Branch of my department which will exclude any man on account of his race or colour except in such specific cases as are provided for by statute or agreement laid on this table."[78] He apparently drafted an order in council designed to restrict black immigration which was never passed. Immigration officials were instructed to discourage black immigation by telling the prospective immigrants that they were not suited for the Canadian

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[77] It was discovered that hookworm was prevalent among Hindus, and W.D. Scott, the Superintendant of Immigration, instructed his officials (presumably at the orders of Oliver) to look for it among blacks. They were were rarely found to carry it. Public Archives of Canada, Immigration Branch Records R.G. 76, Vol. 584, File 820,636, p. 1,390,271.

[78] Winks, The Blacks in Canada, A History, p. 307; House of Common Debates, col. 5945, 23-3-11; Ibid., col. 4471, 2-3-11.

climate.[79]

The fact remains, however, as the Calgary Herald pointed out, that Section 38 (c) of the Immigration Act of 1910 permitted the Minister of the Interior to prohibit the immigration of any race the Government so desired.[80] The question as to why Oliver did not exercise this option remains unanswered. It has been suggested that the delicate stage of negotiations between Canada and the United States concerning reciprocity precluded any action on Canada's behalf that might jeopardize that end. Perhaps the desire not to offend black eastern Canadians was also significant. It was believed at the time that a rigid interpretation of existing laws, especially those regarding health, literacy and finances, would be sufficient to restrict black immigration.[81] In any case, the rumored influx of black immigrants from Oklahoma never materialized, as in 1910-11 only 2,229 immigrated, down

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[79] Given that Immigration officials generally tried to convince prospective immigrants that Canada's climate was very agreeable, their actions with black immigrants was odd. Howard Palmer, "Reponses to Foreign Immigration: Nativism and Ethnic tolerance in Alberta, 1880-1920" (M.A. Thesis, University of Alberta, 1971), p. 186.

[80] Calgary Herald, 17-4-11.

[81] Winks, The Blacks in Canada, A History, pps. 307, 308. Also Hill, "Alberta's Black Settlers," p. 2. Oliver did not indicate why he did not enact any legislation or invoke Section 38 (c). As well, hearsay was the basis of several of the claims made regarding Oliver's plans to prohibit black immigration, though there can be little doubt his tendency was in that direction.

from the previous year.[82] Whether or not through the actions of Oliver or the Government, what was considered by many to be a problem disappeared.

In the last few years of his administration Oliver was confronted with a number of situations which threatened his conception of Canadian society. Ranging from Asian to black American immigration, strong, swift action was required on his part. Just such efforts -- most visibly manifested in the Immigration Act of 1910-- enabled him to accomplish many of the results he desired. Though the number of British immigrants had decreased dramatically in 1906 to 52,901 (less than half the previous year's total), by 1911 they had rebounded to 123,013. The number of American immigrants had increased to their highest level ever to 1911, 121,452. Continental immigration remained low in 1911 at 66,620, just over half the totals of either the British or American immigrants. Quite significantly, Canada's ability to attract agricultural immigrants did not suffer. In 1904-05 38.9% of all immigrants were agriculturalists, while that figure had increased to 42.9% in 1910-11.[83] Reinforcing his reputation as a populist, and demonstrating his acute political sensiblities, Oliver knew both when the country wanted him to act, and the actions it desired he take.

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[82] Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 7.

[83] Ibid., pps. 2, 20, 21.

Those actions most often involved greater restriction and more careful selection, features especially evident in his 1910 Immigration Act. From 1909 to 1911 both the number of immigrants held for inspection and those rejected increased, and the number of deportations decreased.[84] As the fence was being more carefully constructed, the garden, as Oliver saw it, would need less weeding.

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[84] Ibid., pps. 11, 17.

Conclusion

Restriction and Selection:
The Immigration Policy of Frank Oliver

Frank Oliver was re-elected in the face of a Conservative landslide in the election of 1911. He was to finally lose his Edmonton seat in 1917, when the Borden administration, under the power granted by the Wartime Elections Act, used the votes of overseas servicemen to overturn the majority he had received from the voters of Edmonton. In 1923, upon his appointment as the head Commissioner on the Board of Railway Commissioners, Oliver ended his long association with the Edmonton Bulletin. He remained in that position for nearly five years, retiring in 1928. As a mark of his integrity and popularity, his death in 1933 elicted many kind words and praise from friends and foes alike.[1] The pinnacle of Oliver's public career was his tenure as Minister of the Interior. Although such a position encompassed many responsibilities, including those of Dominion lands, mining and Indian affairs, it was in the area of immigration policy that he made his most important contribution.

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[1] Much of this information was found in the Frank Oliver Information File, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton. See also J.K. Johnson, ed. Canadian Directory of Parliament, 1867-1967 (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, 1968).

In the six and a half years that Frank Oliver was the Minister of the Interior he significantly changed the direction of Canadian immigration policy. "We want, not your money, but your citizenship," was Oliver's advice to immigrants.[2] This summed up his philosophy of exactly what immigration policy should be. In Oliver's eyes, the nation did not need economically valuable immigrants as much as it needed culturally desirable ones. Others did not agree with this view. The resultant conflict caused considerable friction during the last ten or eleven years of the Liberal administration. At the turn of the century, Canada was in a plastic stage of development, its shape still to be decided. The immigrants coming to Canada in that period would have a tremendous impact on the form the country would eventually take. However, at that stage of her development, Canada also needed immigrants as labour to build the nation. Thus the friction: should Canada opt for those who could contribute immediately to its economic needs, or should it attempt to attract immigrants--perhaps more difficult to secure -- who would contribute to sustaining the existing cultural values and to a more stable future?

It was Clifford Sifton's desire that the former role was the more important for the immigrant to fulfill. Oliver believed it was the latter. Sifton was the first

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[2] Edmonton Bulletin, 1-2-11.

Liberal Minister of the Interior in the Laurier administration, and he had maintained an open door immigration policy to acquire those economically desirable immigrants. When Oliver became Minister, he had to struggle to pull that door shut. However, just as there were supporters of Sifton's concept of the best immigrant, there were also those who believed as Oliver did, and given that immigration policy eventually did become increasingly selective and restrictive, one might conclude that there were more who thought as Oliver did.

However, many of Sifton's supporters were no doubt swayed by the results of Oliver's policy. Immigration figures during Oliver's administration made it apparent that Canada could have immigrants that were culturally and economically desirable. In 1905 74.5 % of all immigrants came from either Great Britain or the United States. Of those 38.9% were agriculturalists. In 1910 the corresponding figures were 78.6% and 42.9%.[3] By demonstrating that Canada could obtain immigrants both culturally and economically desirable, Oliver had effectively reduced any friction.

These figures demonstrated that Oliver was not solely concerned with the cultural contribution of an immigrant. The immigrant's economic role also figured considerably in

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[3] Immigration Facts and Figures (Department of the Interior, Hon. W.J. Roche, Minister, 1917), pps. 2, 20, 21.

his formulation of immigration policy. He realized that farmers were of primary importance, and that too many general labourers could lead to significant problems during periods of depression -- as happened in 1907-08. Emphasising Oliver's success in incorporating the aspects of restriction and selection into his policy were the numbers denied admittance into Canada, and those deported after having gained entry to the country. In 1903-04, 1,895 (0.01%) were held for inspection at Canadian ports, and of those 274 were rejected. In the same year 85 were deported. In 1910-11, 8,457 (0.03%) were held for inspection, while 2,210 of those were rejected. In that year 784 were deported.[4] Immigration policy was directing officals to more carefully scrutinize immigrants.

Aside from the tangible effects of immigation policy as seen in numbers, perhaps the greatest difference between Oliver's immigration policy and that of his predecessor was that the Oliver's attempted to make immigrants prove their worth before they were admitted entrance into Canada. This philosophy emerged numerous times during Oliver's administration. Immigrants needed documentation stating they had been in a certain occupation before they were granted permission to enter Canada. Japanese students required similar proof. Under

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[4] Inspection of immigrants from the United States was not begun until April, 1908. In 1910-11, 15,404 from there were rejected. Ibid., pps. 11, 15.

Sifton, the word of an immigrant was sufficient. However, because of the number of immigrants falsifying their past, and because of the detrimental impact of those undesirables on Canada, this change in policy was essential. It also went far in establishing a more restrictive immigration policy.

Oliver's conception of immigration policy came from his background. That he was an English-Canadian, born in Ontario, living in the West, and integrally involved in the growth of a small and unstable community had a significant impact on his conception of Canada. In Oliver's mind, there was no doubt that the nation must be in the British mould. To make certain of this, it was essential that immigrants could contribute not only economically -- preferably as farmers or farm labour-- but also socially. That those from Asia, and Southeastern Europe could do so was, in Oliver's mind, questionable. It was also his conviction that those from Britain and the United States could. Therefore Oliver's policy focused immigration efforts on those countries. At the same time the greater restriction provisions of the Immigration Act insured that those from Britain, the United States, and anywhere else who might be a burden on the country would be excluded. The ability to make a cultural contribution to Canada was a prequisite to being granted admission to Canada; it was not a guarantee. Oliver never meant it to

be.

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APPENDIX

TABLE 1 (see end for note)

Population

EDMONTON (district)

Population

	Males Number/ Percent		Females Number/ Percent		Single Male Number/ Percent		Total
1885*	2,890	51.5	2,726	48.4	531	9.5	5,616
1905+	22,321	55.7	17,750	44.3	14,793	37.0	40,071
1911^	34,567	60.6	22,487	39.4	23,225	40.7	57,045

Birth Place

	1885+ Number/ Percent		1905+ Number/ Percent		1911^ Number/ Percent	
Canada	827	14.7	8,796	22.0	29,173	51.1
Great Britain	160	2.8	3,451	8.6	10,780	18.9
Northern Europe	45	0.8	1,320	3.3	3,074	5.4
American	28	0.5	4,319	10.8	8,126	14.2
S/E Europe	--	--	8,731	21.8	4,691	8.2
Oriental	--	--	91	0.2	244	0.4

ALBERTA

Population

	Males Number/ Percent		Females Number/ Percent		Single Male Number/ Percent		Total
1885*	8,342	53.7	7,191	46.3	531	3.4	15,533
1901+	41,019	56.2	32,003	43.8	27,182	37.2	73,002
1906+	108,283	58.4	77,129	41.6	72,284	40.0	185,412
1911^	223,989	59.8	150,647	40.2	147,587	39.4	374,663

Birth Place #'s/%'s

	1885* Number	/Percent	1901@ Number	/Percent
Canada	2,363	15.2	16,683	25.3
Great Britain	1,164	7.5	7,120	10.8
American	420	2.7	10,972	16.7
Northern Europe	94	0.6	3,635	5.5
S/E Europe	33	0.2	8,132	12.3
Oriental	--	--	221	0.3

	1906+ Number	/Percent	1911^ Number	/Percent
Canada	86,818	46.8	162,237	43.3
Great Britain	23,809	12.8	65,839	17.6
American	43,251	23.3	81,357	21.7
Northern Europe	11,203	6.0	18,516	4.9
S/E Europe	17,663	9.5	49,644	13.2
Oriental	984	0.5	2,097	0.6

Religion

	1885+ Number/	Percent	1901+ Number/	Percent	1911^ Number/	Percent
Catholic	3,811	24.6	12,957	17.7	62,193	16.6
Methodist	2,464	15.9	9,632	13.2	61,884	16.5
Presbyterian	1,095	7.0	10,655	14.6	66,351	17.7
Anglican	977	6.3	8,888	12.2	55,628	14.8
Baptist	60	0.4	2,798	3.8	19,491	5.2
Lutheran	45	0.3	5,810	8.0	43,311	11.6
Congregationalist	21	0.1	347	0.5	2,628	0.7
Jews	--	--	242	0.3	1,207	0.3

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES

Population #'s/%'s

	Males Number/ Percent		Females Number/ Percent		Single Males Number/ Percent		Total
1885*	27,113	56.1	21,249	43.9	18,861	39.0	48,362
1901@	87,430	54.3	73,502	45.7	57,597	35.8	160,932
1905+	261,074	58.9	182,101	41.1	n/a		443,175
1911^	515,719	59.5	351,376	40.5	340,939	39.3	867,095

Birth Places #'s/%'s

	1885* Number/Percent		1901@ Number/Percent	
Canada	14,218	29.4	41,097	25.9
Great Britain	7,158	14.8	17,347	10.9
America	1,007	2.1	13,877	8.7
Northern Europe	328	0.7	6,530	4.1
Other Europe	129	0.3	21,961	13.8
Oriental	-	-	291	0.2

	1905+ Number/Percent		1911^ Number/Percent	
Canada	125,555	28.3	406,988	46.9
Great Britain	59,327	13.4	142,693	16.4
America	78,715	17.8	81,357	9.4
Northern Europe	27,524	6.2	40,275	4.6
S/E Europe	57,060	12.9	59,787	6.9
Oriental	1,378	0.3	3,318	0.4

Northern Europe includes Scandinavia, Iceland, France, Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland.
Oriental includes China, Japan, and India.
These statistics are taken from:

*Census of the Three Provisional Districts of the North-West Territories, 1884-85.
@Fourth Census of Canada, 1901.
+Canada, Sessional Paper, 1907, no. 17a.

^Fifth Census of Canada, 1911.

TABLE 2

Canadians Born in the United States*

	Number	Increase	
		Number	Percentage
1880	717,157	---	---
1890	980,938	263,781	36.8
1900	1,179,922	198,984	20.3
1910	1,204,637	24,715	2.1

	Number as a Percentage of the Canadian Population	Number as a Percentage of the Canadian Born Population
1880	---	---
1890	20.3	23.4
1900	22.0	25.3
1910	16.7	21.4

*Leon Truesdell, The Canadian Born in the United States (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1943), p. 10.

TABLE 3

Homesteads **

	1893 Number	1893 Percent	1894 Number	1894 Percent	1895 Number	1895 Percent
Canada	1,622	41.7	1,032	32.5	718	30.0
Britain	526	13.5	460	14.5	318	13.3
America	58	1.5	634	20.0	452	18.9
N Europe	401	10.3	336	10.6	218	9.1
S/E Europe	295	7.6	238	7.5	149	6.2
Total	3,890		3,174		2,394	

	1896 Number	1896 Percent	1897 Number	1897 Percent	1898 Number	1898 Percent
Canada	618	33.3	757	31.5	1,651	34.1
Britain	389	20.9	416	17.3	720	14.9
America	142	7.6	164	6.8	581	12.0
N Europe	150	8.1	210	8.7	309	6.4
S/E Europe	171	9.2	453	18.8	957	19.7
Total	1,857		2,406		4,848	
Percent of Total Immigration			11.7		15.2	

	1899 Number	1899 Percent	1900+ Number	1900+ Percent	1901 Number	1901 Percent
Canada	2,239	33.5	1,588	38.4	2,516	30.8
Britain	867	13.0	495	12.0	840	10.3
America	1,064	15.9	833	20.2	2,026	24.8
N Europe	361	5.4	377	9.1	582	7.1
S\E Europe	1,434	21.4	456	11.0	1,302	15.9
Total	6,689		4,132		8,167	
Percent of Total Immigration	15.0		17.3		16.6	

	1902		1903		1904	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Canada	4,481	30.6	7,435	23.7	6,281	24.1
Britain	1,580	10.8	3,876	12.3	4,664	17.9
America	4,761	32.5	10,942	34.9	7,730	29.6
N Europe	816	5.6	1,873	6.0	1,846	7.1
S\E Europe	1,743	11.9	5,340	17.0	3,037	11.6
Total	14,633		31,383		26,073	
Percent of Total Immigration	21.7		24.4		20.0	

	1905		1906		1907*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Canada	8,207	26.6	12,370	29.5	6,346	29.3
Britain	5,930	19.2	8,097	19.3	4,091	18.9
America	8,532	27.7	12,485	29.8	6,059	28.0
N Europe	2,285	7.4	2,613	6.2	1,289	5.9
S\E Europe	2,667	8.7	2,956	7.1	1,630	7.5
Total	30,819		41,869		21,647	
Percent of Total Immigration	21.1		22.1		17.4	

	1908		1909		1910	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Canada	7,927	26.1	10,962	28.0	12,22	29.4
Britain	6,205	20.4	7,465	19.1	7,331	17.6
America	7,818	25.7	9,829	25.1	12,813	30.8
N Europe	2,157	7.1	2,394	6.1	2,620	6.3
S/E Europe	3,323	10.9	5,125	13.1	4,256	10.2
Total	30,424		39,081		41,568	
Percent of Total Immigration	11.6		26.6		19.9	

	1911 Number	/Percent	1912 Number	/Percent
Canada	13,209	29.7	9,942	25.4
Britain	7,944	17.7	7,256	18.5
America	12,485	28.1	10,577	27.0
N Europe	3,115	7.0	3,173	8.1
S/E Europe	5,833	13.1	5,937	15.2
Total	44,479		39,151	
Percent of Total Immigration	14.3		11.0	

Canadian includes Canadians returning from the United States.

N Europe includes France, Belgian, Swiss, Holland, Scandinavia, and Iceland.

Percentages do not add up to 100 as there are a number of insignificant groups of homesteaders, and homesteaders who had previously entries (often a large number), who are not included.

+six months ending June 30

*nine months ending March 31

**Canada, Parliament, Sessional Papers, 1894 - 1913.

TABLE 4

Migration from Great Britain to Extra-European Countries; British Migration to Canada*

	British Migration	British To Canada	Percentage of British to Canada
1890	218,116	22,520	10.3
1891	218,507	21,578	9.9
1892	210,042	23,254	11.1
1893	208,814	24,732	11.8
1894	156,030	17,459	11.2
1895	185,181	16,622	9.0
1896	161,925	15,267	9.4
1897	146,460	15,571	10.6
1898	140,644	17,640	12.5
1899	146,362	16,410	11.2
1900	168,825	18,443	10.9
1901	171,715	15,757	9.2
1902	205,662	26,293	12.8
1903	259,950	59,652	22.9
1904	271,435	69,681	25.7
1905	262,077	82,437	31.5
1906	325,137	114,859	35.3
1907	395,750	151,216	38.2
1908	257,611	78,591	30.5
1909	282,490	82,770	29.3
1910	386,657	150,205	38.8
1911	440,821	177,266	40.2
1912	431,021	175,630	40.7
1913	389,394	190,485	48.9

*N.H. Carrier and J.R. Jeffery, External Migration: A Study of the Available Statistics 1815-1950, Studies on Medical and Population Subjects, no. 6 (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1953) pps. 92-93, 96. The British immigration to Canada in Carrier's and Jeffery's study is usually higher than that listed in the Canadian census, but for consistency, given the fact that I am using their work for total British emigration statistics, I have used Carrier's and Jeffery's figures for both columns here.

TABLE 5

Immigration Expenditures ($), 1897-98 to 1913-1914

	British Isles		Continental		United States	
	Amount/	Percent	Amount/	Percent	Amount/	Percent
1897-98	61,000	34.1	31,000	17.3	87,000	48.6
1898-99	41,000	26.8	37,000	24.2	75,000	49.0
1899-1900	96,000	35.4	63,000	23.2	112,000	41.3
1900-01	110,000	37.0	43,000	14.5	144,000	48.5
1901-02	121,000	33.9	58,000	16.2	178,000	49.9
1902-03	205,000	48.1	60,000	14.1	161,000	37.8
1903-04	236,000	45.5	78,000	15.0	205,000	39.5
1904-05	181,000	29.3	111,800	18.1	325,000	52.6
1905-06	148,000	29.7	102,600	20.6	248,000	49.7
1906-07	174,000	47.4	42,000	20.6	151,000	41.1
1907-08 (9 mts.)	270,000	45.4	74,000	11.4	250,000	42.1
1908-09	218,305	41.9	25,050	0.5	277,182	53.2
1909-10	251,326	49.1	18,994	3.7	241,150	47.1
1910-11	307,326	51.0	61,384	10.2	233,636	38.0
1911-12	376,726	48.8	30,546	3.9	368,655	47.5
1912-13	402,214	55.9	40,335	3.6	276,684	38.5
1913-14	545,075	56.1	42,264	4.3	384,603	35.6

Immigration Facts and Figures, p. 22.

TABLE 6

Occupation of Immigrants

	1903-04		1904-05		1905-06	
Number of Immigrants	130,330		146,266		189,064	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculturalists	47,195	36.2	56,852	38.9	80,631	42.6
General Labourers	22,152	17.0	23,889	16.3	32,692	17.3
Mechanics	16,150	12.4	25,980	17.8	37,514	19.8

	1906-07*		1907-08		1908-09	
Number of Immigrants	124,667		262,469		146,899	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculturalists	47,858	38.4	85,189	32.5	68,505	46.6
Genera Labourers	28,659	23.0	67,494	25.7	25,987	17.7
Mechanics	24,598	19.7	58,561	22.3	23,485	16.0

	1909-10		1910-11		1911-12	
Number of Immigrants	208,794		311,114		354,237	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculturalists	100,337	48.1	132,866	42.7	132,388	37.4
General Labourers	36,407	17.4	63,173	20.3	106,529	30.1
Mechanics	31,120	14.9	44,072	14.2	34,928	9.9

*nine months ended March 31, 1907.
Immigration Facts and Figures, pps., 20, 21.

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